MONDAY
May 13, 2024

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
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*Approx. calculated food equivalence values considering ICMR NIN 2020 RDA in Women (sedentary activity). #Globaldietarydatabase.org/data-download, accessed 10th May'24.
**Source: Nicholas Hall's Global CHC database, DB6 Q1'23. Creative Visualization. PM-IN-CNT-23-00048.

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Jharkhand Congress Minister summoned

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Panel flags lack of progress in restoration

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Fertility rate has more to do with development

It has very less to do with religion

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SUPER SUNDAY

CSK and RCB register wins, stay in the hunt

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Political parties gearing up for Council polls

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

After the polling for the Lok Sabha elections, political parties in the State are bracing up for one more round of contest in the form of elections to six seats of the Legislative Council from graduates' and teachers' constituencies.

These elections, scheduled for June 3 – a day before the announcement of the Lok Sabha polls results – have again set the stage for a prestige battle between the ruling Congress and the Opposition BJP-JD(S) combine.

The Congress is trying to use this opportunity to increase its numerical strength in the 75-member Upper House while the Opposition wants to send a political message by holding its ground.

FULL REPORT ON
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Fourth phase polling in 96 constituencies today

Union Ministers, key Opposition figures, including Akhilesh Yadav and Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, in the fray; A.P. to elect 175-member Legislative Assembly; EC expects fair weather this time

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

The fourth phase of the Lok Sabha election will see 96 Lok Sabha constituencies across 10 States and Union Territories going to the polls on Monday.

Prominent candidates in the fray include Union Ministers Giriraj Singh (Begusarai, Bihar), Nityanand Rai (Ujiarpur, Bihar), Arjun Munda (Khunti, Jharkhand), and Ajay Mishra Teni (Kheri, Uttar Pradesh); five-time Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury (Baharampur, West Bengal), Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav (Kannauj, U.P.), and All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi (Hyderabad, Telangana).

High stakes: Polling officials leave after collecting EVMs and other election material in Srinagar on Sunday. NISSAR AHMAD

Andhra Pradesh Congress president Y.S. Sharmila (Kadapa), and Trinamool Congress leaders Mahua Moitra (Krishnanagar, West Bengal) and Shatrughan Sinha (Asansol, West Bengal) are also among the key candidates.

Noting that all arrangements are in place for the smooth conduct of the election, the Election Commission (EC) said: "Since Phase-3, the voter turnout app is updated with a new feature of displaying overall approximate turnout live for each phase." This means that the voter turnout data for each phase, State and Assembly and parliamentary constituency will now be available live on the app on a two-hourly basis on polling day until 7 p.m. Thereafter, it will be continuously updated on the arrival of polling parties.

The constituencies that will vote on Monday have 8.97 crore male and 8.73 crore female electors. The 175 Assembly seats of Andhra Pradesh and 28 of Odisha will also go to the polls. The polling time has been increased in Telangana (from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.) to increase voter participation.

The EC said that there is no significant concern regarding hot weather conditions during the polling on Monday.

CONTINUED ON
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Kejriwal announces list of 10 guarantees to script 'new India'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday announced 10 guarantees that would be fulfilled if the INDIA bloc came to power at the Centre.

Titled "Kejriwal *ki* 10 Guarantee", the list comprises free 24-hour power supply, good education, free healthcare that is not based on insurance schemes, freedom for the Indian Army to retrieve Indian territory occupied by China, scrapping the Agniveer scheme, fixing MSP on all crops according to the Swaminathan Commission report, two crore jobs for the youth, ease of doing business for traders, full Statehood for Delhi, and destroying the BJP's "washing machine" that gives protection to "corrupt persons" who join the party.

Arvind Kejriwal

"The existing system of the BJP through which it sends honest people to jail will be abolished," Mr. Kejriwal said while announcing the guarantees.

"I do not want to become Prime Minister of the country. But it is my guarantee that if the INDIA bloc comes to power, I will ensure that these will be implemented on a war footing," Mr. Kejriwal said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

NEARBY

First set of coaches to arrive by August

BENGALURU
After receiving the prototype coaches from China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation, BMRCL is now expecting the Kolkata-based TRSL to deliver the first set of coaches for Bengaluru Metro's Yellow Line between August 2024 and February 2025. » Page 2

BTP take up cleaning drive

BENGALURU
It was a hectic day for Kamashiplaya traffic police as a team resorted to a cleaning drive on a stretch of Magadi Road between Srigandha Kaval and Sumanahalli on Sunday.

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EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 8 & 9

Summer splash

Cool customers: As the summer rages, people get drenched in the Ermai falls in the foothills of the Western Ghats in Belthangady, near Mangaluru, in Karnataka. THULASI KAKKAT

Five-year-old boy killed, one injured in car accident in city

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A five-year-old boy was killed and his neighbour, also aged five, was injured when a car ran over them at Murugeshpalya on Sunday. The children were playing in front of their houses.

The deceased boy, Aarav, and the other boy were playing while the former's family was busy preparing for a function. A person, who is around 18 years old and related to a policeman staying in another house nearby, was cleaning a car outside the house.

According to the police, the teenager started the car and stepped on the accelerator.

As a result, the car moved forward, knocking down a few vehicles before running over the two boys who were playing. Both the children sustained severe injuries.

The car that was involved in the accident.

Residents rushed the two to the nearby Manipal Hospitals.

However, Aarav, who suffered a severe head injury, was declared dead at the hospital while the other boy sustained fractures in his leg.

Soon after the accident, the accused boy ran into the house and locked himself up until The Jeevan Bima Nagar Traffic Police rushed to the spot and detained the teenager for further investigation.

The deceased boy Aarav's birthday was due next month, lamented his father, Tamare Kannan.

Case booked

Based on Mr. Kannan's complaint, the police have now booked a case for rash and negligent driving and for causing death due to negligence against the teenager.

A forensic examination of the vehicle and the spot was conducted.

Fighting rages across parts of Gaza Strip

Associated Press
RAFAH

Israeli forces pushed deeper into Gaza's southern city of Rafah on Sunday and battled Hamas in parts of the devastated north that the military said it had cleared months ago but where militants have regrouped.

Rafah is considered Hamas' last stronghold. It is also the last refuge in Gaza for more than a million civilians. Some 300,000 Palestinians have fled the city following evacuation orders from Israel, which says it must invade to dismantle Hamas and return scores of hostages taken in the Oct. 7 attack against Israel that sparked the war.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 16

Prajwal case: SIT arrests two for leaking explicit clips

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA/BENGALURU

The Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing alleged multiple instances of sexual abuse by Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna and all related cases, has, for the first time, begun its investigation into the leak of the explicit clips.

The SIT arrested Likhith Gowda and Chetan from Hassan on Sunday morning (May 12) for allegedly circulating obscene content. They are reportedly BJP workers and close associates of former Hassan BJP MLA and BJP state general secretary Preetham Gowda. There were allegations that several followers of Preetham Gowda, owing to his differences with the H.D. Revanna family, had not worked for the NDA candidate Prajwal Revanna. Preetham Gowda is yet to react to any of these allegations.

SIT officials conducted mahazar at Chetan's residence in Yalagunda in Hassan taluk and Likhith Gowda's residence in Sharavanabelagola on Sunday following their arrest. SIT officials recovered two pen drives and a Central Processing Unit (CPU) of a desktop computer that the accused had allegedly used to spread the obscene clips. SIT sources said the duo had conspired to destroy these digital devices to cover their tracks and were caught in the nick of time.

Their arrests are in connection with the FIR registered at Hassan CEN Police Station on April 23, a day after several pen drives with the explicit clips were found in and around Hassan town on the morning of April 22. Poornachandra Tejaswi, an advocate and JD (S) party agent of Hassan Lok Sabha constituency, filed a complaint with CEN Police in Hassan on April 23 against Naveen Gowda and others. He alleged that Naveen Gowda and others created morphed images of JD (S) candidate Prajwal and circulated them through pen drive, CD, WhatsApp in the constituency.

SIT invokes Section 376 of IPC against Prajwal Revanna

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

It has now come to light that the Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing alleged multiple instances of sexual abuse by Prajwal Revanna, has invoked Section 376 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for rape against the "absconding" Hassan MP in the first FIR registered against him on April 28, a day after he flew out of the country to Germany.

With this, the number of rape cases against Prajwal Revanna has risen to three.

Two other cases of rape were registered against Prajwal Revanna, based on the statements of a 44-year-old political worker and a former domestic help of around 60 years of age, who was allegedly abducted at the behest of Mr. Revanna and rescued by the Special Investigation Team.

Prajwal Revanna

With this, the number of rape cases against Prajwal has risen to three

The FIR, in which rape charges have been invoked against Mr. Prajwal now, was registered on April 28 at Holenarsipur Town Police Station and was the first case referred to the SIT during its formation.

Based on a complaint by a 47-year-old former domestic help in their Holenarsipur household, also a relative of Mr. Revanna's wife Bhavani Revanna, Mr. Revanna and Mr. Prajwal were booked for sexual harassment under various subsections of Section 354 of the IPC. The complainant did not reveal rape initially and only alleged that she was sexually harassed and inappropriately touched by the father and the son when she worked in their house.

However, further investigation into the case and the victim's statement before the magistrate under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) revealed that the woman was raped by Mr. Prajwal.

Following this, the SIT added rape charges against him in the same FIR, even as Mr. Revanna continues to be booked only for sexual harassment in the case.

RELATED REPORT ON
» PAGE 3

Thousands flee northeast Ukraine

Associated Press
VILCHA

Thousands more civilians have fled Russia's renewed ground offensive in Ukraine's northeast, officials said Sunday. The intense battles have forced at least one Ukrainian unit to withdraw in the Kharkiv region, capitulating more land to Russian forces across less defended settlements along the Russian border.

A police official of Kharkiv said Russian forces were in the outskirts of the town of Vovchansk and approaching from three directions.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 16

India's 4x400m relay teams credit Nassau training for punching ticket to Paris

The move by AFI and SAI to send the athletes on a month-long camp helped them acclimatise and bounce back to qualify for the 2024 Olympics

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

The Indian men's and women's 4x400m relay teams overcame failures to seal Paris Olympic quota places in the Bahamas and heave a sigh of relief. They think the initiative to send them for a month-long training camp in Nassau played a critical part in the preparation for the important assignment.

The men's quartet of Muhammed Anas, Muhammed Ajmal, Arokia Rajiv and Amoj Jacob, which could not register a time in its first attempt as Rajesh Ramesh pulled out due to a hamstring injury, bounced back to clock 3:03.23 and punched a ticket to Paris.

Jacob said the Athletics Federation of India's (AFI's) plan and the Sports Authority of India (SAI) supporting the camp was an essential ingredient in the success.

"It was really helpful, especially the jet lag. Right now I am sleepy, I want to sleep. I am going to sleep at 11 p.m. and am waking up at 1 in the night. I am not able to sleep, I am just getting two hours of sleep. My body is getting used to sleeping around like 12 or 1 in the afternoon, it is a bit hard. But if I have to compete in the Diamond League, then I have to go to Eugene and compete and then come back and compete in China. I have to get used to it.

"It took me around two weeks to get used to their timing. And after we were able to cope up with the work out. Unfortunately, Rajesh, our second leg runner, pulled his hamstring during the heats. Otherwise we would have clocked below three minutes in the heats and qualified. In the finals we were a bit stressed about what would happen, but we qualified. Our motto was to qualify and we did it. We are really thankful that we went one month before," said Jacob.

Living in an apartment near the venue and getting served Indian food, like they are served at the SAI training centre in Thiruvananthapuram also helped the athletes.

Adapting, delivering

Chief coach Radhakrishnan Nair pointed out that the camp helped the sprinters overcome jet lag and adapt to an entirely different time zone, which is nine-and-half hours behind India time.

"It takes 10 to 12 days to adapt to the time zone and jet lag. We came back on May 9. Still we have the problem of jet lag. The coaching camp helped in adapting and getting qualified for the Olympics. We expected a medal in the 4x400m men's relay. Unfortunately, our second best runner got injured during the heats and we could not finish," said Nair.

Even though both Indian men and women teams qualified for Paris, the men's story stands out for its superb fightback.

Ajmal threw light as to how the team changed its plans after Rajesh's injury. "We were a little upset because we wanted to qualify in the first round itself and we could have done a below three-minute performance. And we could have fought for a medal. But we shrugged off the setback as there can be ups and downs in life. So we thought we have to qualify no matter what. Good that we could achieve what we aimed at," said Ajmal.

"The new coach (Jason Dawson) is good. He changed our position and I ran the second leg and Arokia bhaiya ran the third leg. We practised the baton exchange, but you don't need to do it too many times in 400m."

Boosting confidence

Ajmal pointed out that the men's team's fine showing in the Budapest World championships, where India clocked 2:59.05 in the heats and 2:59.92 in the final, has boosted the confidence of the runners.

"We did well in Budapest and that has given us a lot of confidence that we can do well."

Jacob did not mind the challenge the team faced in the Bahamas. "There should be challenges in life. If everything goes smoothly, then life becomes boring. There should be some ups and downs. After Budapest, we knew we could run 2:58. So if we clock between 2:59 and 2:57 in the Olympics, then we can have a medal. The coach had said you try to qualify in the heats so that I can change the team and give others a chance as I don't want you to push everywhere so that we can move forward. But there was a little bit of pressure because of our failure in the heats.

"It was a bit dicey running with the USA as they run below three every time. They may have 10-15 others who are at this level. We don't have that kind of luxury as we get people with 46 timing (soon after us). At the moment, we have six 45 runners and a few who can do 46.

"Since the workout load is more, you feel the impact. I hope the team will peak by the Olympics and we will not have any issues. We have got the boys, but we have to be careful about injuries. There is enough time. I take a month to get back my fitness, but everybody is different. Everybody is fit, but we have to be careful so that no one gets injured. If something major happens, it takes away six to eight months which is very risky."

The women's side, including Rupal Chaudhary, Jyothika Sri Dandi, M.R. Poovamma and Subha Venkatesan, after its initial failure, grabbed the second opportunity to book a ticket with a time of 3:29.35 and qualify for Paris 2024. Qualification of both the men and women has raised the hopes of the Indian mixed team qualifying for the Olympics through the Asian Relays on May 20 and 21.

"The Asian Relays are there and we can get the mixed relay quota there in Bangkok. Hopefully we will do well there," said a confident Ajmal.

Nair agreed. "We are well placed in Asia. Our mixed relay team should qualify. Also, we don't have to bother about acclimatisation and we can leave for Bangkok just two days prior," said Nair.

Ajmal, Amoj, Subha and Jyothika. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

> We are well placed in Asia. Our mixed relay team should qualify. Also, we don't have to bother about acclimatisation
>
> **RADHAKRISHNAN NAIR**
> Chief coach

THE GIST

- Jacob felt that the Athletics Federation of India and Sports Authority of India supporting the camp was an essential ingredient in the success
- Chief coach Radhakrishnan Nair pointed out that the camp helped the sprinters overcome jet lag and adapt to an entirely different time zone
- Qualification of both the men's and women's squads has raised the hopes of the Indian mixed team also making it to Paris through the Asian Relays on May 20 and 21

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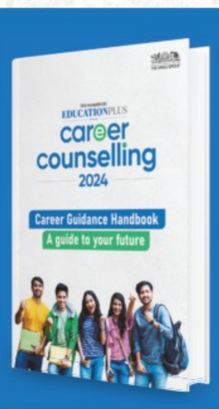

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Kolkata-based TRSL to deliver first set of coaches for Yellow Line by August

The inaugural driverless prototype train for Namma Metro's Yellow Line, a 19-km route linking R.V. Road to Bommasandra near Electronics City, is expected to be operational by the end of this year. This line features a metro-cum-road flyover stretching 3.13 km

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

The primary objective of the Yellow Line is to enhance connectivity to regions housing major companies such as Infosys and Biocon, as well as to South Bengaluru. FILE PHOTO

After receiving the prototype coaches from China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation (CRRC), China, the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) is now expecting the Kolkata-based Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL) to deliver the first set of coaches for Bengaluru Metro's Yellow Line (RV Road - Bommasandra) between August 2024 and February 2025.

BMRCL officials have said production of the first six-coach train is set to commence soon. "The first set of coaches from TRSL is expected to reach Bengaluru in August, and the second in September this year," the official said.

On February 14, the BMRCL received the first set of six coaches, which arrived at the Hebbagodi metro depot from China and are now undergoing multiple tests.

The inaugural driverless prototype train for Bengaluru Metro's upcoming Yellow Line, a 19-km route linking R.V. Road to Bommasandra near Electronics City, is expected to be operational by the end of this year.

The CRRC factory in China secured a ₹1,578 crore contract in 2019 to deliver 216 metro coaches to BMRCL. However, they were unable to fulfill the contract due to not having established a manufacturing plant in India as required. This delay affected the supply of metro trains to BMRCL. Previously, BMRCL had issued several notices to CRRC, considering the encashment of its ₹372 crore bank guarantee. Currently, the Chinese company has partnered with Kolkata-based Titagarh Wagons to deliver the remaining coaches.

"In addition to the Prototype Train for CBTC, CRRC, China is supplying one more prototype train with DTG Signalling. The balance of 34 train sets (14 CBTC & 20 DTG) are being manufactured in India at Titagarh Rail Systems Limited in West Bengal," a BMRCL official said.

The under-construction 18.82 km-long metro line in Bengaluru, known as the Yellow Line, connects R.V. Road with Bommasandra. The revised deadline for its completion is December 2024. While the civil work has been finished, delays in obtaining trains have halted progress on the metro line. The route is fully elevated and comprises 16 stations. It links with the Green Line of Bengaluru Metro at R.V. Road Station and with the Pink Line at Jayadeva Hospital Station.

This line features a metro-cum-road flyover stretching 3.13 km from Ragi Gudda to Central Silk Board, constructed to ease congestion at Central Silk Board Junction.

The primary objective of the Yellow Line is to enhance connectivity to regions housing major companies such as Infosys and Biocon, as well as to South Bengaluru.

Rain, hailstorm bring relief from heat

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Some parts of Bengaluru city received heavy rainfall on Sunday. FILE PHOTO

Moderate rains lashed parts of the city on Sunday bringing relief from the sweltering summer heat. Residents in some parts of the city noticed accompanying hailstones.

"It started raining at 4 p.m. and we were surprised to see hailstones in Girinagar. Downpour accompanied with heavy wind brought hailstones," said Rajesh K., a resident. The hailstones were reported in Basavanagudi, Jayanagar, Tilaknagar, Hanumanthnagar and parts of south Bengaluru, according to residents.

Meanwhile, waterlogging was also reported in Bannerghatta Road, Jayanagar, Banashankari, and Arekere. This has also led to traffic snarls on this road particularly in the South Bengaluru area.

On Saturday, the Indian Meteorological Department(IMD) forecast ongoing rainfall in Karnataka for the upcoming week. Bengaluru is also expected to receive light to moderate rains in different areas of the city until May 13, with a yellow alert in place.

N. Puviarasan, Scientist from IMD in a release on Sunday, stated that the trough or wind discontinuity from Marathawada to Comorin area now runs from East Madhya Pradesh to Comorin area across Vidarbha, Marathwada, Interior Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu at 0.9 km above mean sea level. A cyclonic circulation lies over South Interior Karnataka and neighborhood at 1.5 km above mean sea level. The cyclonic circulation over the southeast Arabian Sea off Kerala coast at 1.5 km above mean sea level has become less marked."

"The weather forecast for Bengaluru over the next 48 hours indicates a generally cloudy sky. There is a likelihood of light to moderate rain or thunderstorms in some areas towards evening and night. The maximum and minimum temperatures are expected to be around 32°C and 24°C respectively," he added.

National Space Day: ISRO announces logo design contest

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has invited the public to design a logo that embodies the spirit of the nation's space achievements.

The logo design contest announced by the space agency is part of the 1st National Space Day celebrations.

"India had successfully landed its Chandrayaan-3 Vikram lander on the lunar south polar region on August 23, 2023. To commemorate this feat, every year August 23 has been declared as National Space Day by the Government of India," ISRO said.

It added that on the 1st National Space Day, the Department of Space will be conducting extensive celebrations across the country. The theme selected for National Space Day this year is "Touching Lives while Touching the Moon: India's Space Saga".

"ISRO's commitment to **This year's theme is 'Touching lives while touching the moon: India's space saga'**

Space science is inseparable from its commitment to society and for encouraging public participation in this mega event, ISRO/DOS solicits from the citizens of India to unleash their creativity by designing a logo that embodies the spirit of our nation's space achievements," the space agency said.

It added that the chosen design should resonate with the theme, leaving a lasting impression.

The selected design will be exhibited on different brochures, banners, merchandise, etc. related to National Space Day-2024.

Deadline
The public must to submit the designs as digital creations to nsd2024@isro.gov.in on or before May 20, 2024. (jpg, png, pdf format).

City traffic police take up cleaning drive on Magadi Road stretch

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Traffic police personnel cleaning Magadi Road between Shrigandha Kaval and Sumanahalli on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

It was a hectic day for Kamashiplaya traffic police as a team resorted to a cleaning drive on a stretch of Magadi Road between the busy Srigandha Kaval and Sumanahalli, as multiple overload trucks had dropped gravel stones on the stretch posing threat to the road users on Sunday.

Following a series of complaints of the gravel stones coming under the moving wheels being shot towards other vehicles and road users, posing a threat to their safety, traffic police took up the cleaning drive themselves. The police reached the spot and blocked the traffic from both the sides and started clearing the gravel. It took the police team over an hour to clean the road and ensure smooth movement of the traffic, a senior police officer said.

Reckless driving
According to the police the incident warrants action under Section 184 of the Motor Vehicle Act, 1988, which defines a reckless act while driving. "This is purely an act of reckless driving on the part of that heavy goods vehicle drivers. They overload the trucks and spill gravel stones, sand, and other materials on the road as they go. This poses a big risk to other commuters on the road," the officer said.

Trucks carrying construction materials have been instructed to follow all safety norms and cover the trucks with tarpaulins. The trucks are also banned from entering the city in the daytime to avoid untoward incidents. However, a majority of the trucks carrying such material do not follow the rules and their drivers are reckless, a police officer added. Many drivers even when they are caught are ready to pay a fine of ₹1,000 but do not follow the rules, he rues. The onus is on the traffic police deployed on such roads to ensure trucks moving in the night should follow safety norms, the official said.

However, a senior traffic policeman said that in many instances like these, traffic personnel on the road have had to resort to filling potholes, cleaning road stretches, clearing fallen branches, clearing inundated roads, and removing vehicles that breakdown, among other works due to delay in response from the civic bodies.

Woman killed in tree-fall incident in Chikkamagaluru

Three people suffered injuries when a tree fell on a moving car near Kattimane in N.R. Pura taluk on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA/KALABURAGI

A woman pedestrian died and three people suffered injuries in two tree-fall incidents during rain accompanied by high-speed wind in N.R. Pura taluk of Chikkamagaluru district on Sunday.

Savitha, 48, a resident of Melinapete in Koppa taluk, died during her visit to her farm at Kattinamane in N.R. Pura.

She died on the spot as a tree fell on her while she was returning from her farm. In another incident, also from the same place, a tree fell on a moving car, leaving three people injured.

The injured were shifted to the government hospital at Balehonnurwith the help of local people.

Dies in lightning strike
Apparaya Bhimaraya Kalamud, a 43-year-old farmer of Gogi village in Kamalapur taluk of Kalaburagi district, was killed in a lightning strike on Sunday.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, MAY. 13		
RISE	05:55	SET 18:37
RISE	10:29	SET 23:45
TUESDAY, MAY. 14		
RISE	05:55	SET 18:37
RISE	11:24	SET 00:00
WEDNESDAY, MAY. 15		
RISE	05:54	SET 18:38
RISE	12:14	SET 00:28

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	35	27
Mysuru	35	24
Bengaluru	32	22

Bengaluru Today
35°C Morning will be pleasant Day will be warm and uneasy. Night also will be comfortable. Chances of thunderstorm.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
35°C Weather will be warm with uneasy afternoon. Night will comfortable. Short spell of light rain and thundershower may occur at some places.

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THE HINDU
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Bengaluru-Deoghar direct flights from June 1

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

IndiGo has announced direct flights between Bengaluru and Deoghar, three times a week. Beginning from June 1, these direct flights will operate on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

"This new route will enhance connectivity from the southern part of India to the famous religious hubs in Jharkhand. Today, IndiGo is the only airline operating from Deogarh Airport. With these new flights, Bengaluru will become the fifth destination to provide direct connectivity to Deoghar, after Kolkata, Patna, Ranchi, and Delhi," Indigo said.

Vinay Malhotra, Head of Global Sales at IndiGo, said, "As the first and only airline providing connectivity to Deoghar, we are pleased to announce direct flights between Bengaluru and Deoghar. This will not only provide customers with access to the unexplored beauty of Jharkhand's holy city, but will also offer enhanced accessibility, increased flight options, and improved connectivity for students and employment-seekers travelling across the region."

Deoghar, located in Jharkhand, is home to the famous Baidyanath Temple, one of the twelve Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva, which attracts millions of devotees every year. "The city is also known for its natural beauty. Deoghar is a popular destination for those seeking spiritual solace," the airline said. The flight will leave Bengaluru at 10.05 a.m. and arrive at Deoghar at 12.25 noon, from Deoghar it will depart at 12.55 noon and arrive in Bengaluru at 3.25 p.m.

1.18 lakh candidates write COMEDK UGET

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Consortium of Medical, Engineering, and Dental Colleges of Karnataka (COMEDK) Undergraduate Entrance Test (UGET) and Uni-GAUGE entrance examination 2024 were conducted at 264 centres in 191 cities across India on Sunday with 87.96% of the registered candidates appearing for the examination.

Out of the total 1,18,005 candidates who had registered, 1,03,799 attended the examination. In Karnataka, the exam was conducted in 72 centres out of which 33 were in Bengaluru. While 35,124 out of 38,475 candidates took the test in Karnataka, 17,830 out of 19,676 attended the test in Bengaluru.

While some students found mathematics and physics papers to be a little difficult, others said that chemistry was confusing.

Bhavya Meghan, from Deeksha ISBR, who was a candidate at Global Academy of Technology said, "The difficulty of the exam was moderate. Chemistry was the easiest section, whereas physics and mathematics were tough in some places. I found the latter a little difficult. The paper seemed lengthier than usual, but I was able to finish on time."

Tanish Suragihalli who took his exam at Cambridge Institute of Technology said, "I found the math section pretty easy, and the test paper overall was very physics-focused. The chemistry and organic chemistry questions were confusing to work on."

However, many reported that attempting 180 questions in 180 minutes is a challenging task for any subject.

Ankur Singh, a student from Delhi Public School East who wrote his examination at Dayanand Sagar University, Hosur Road, found the chemistry section particularly challenging.

Emphasising the role of luck due to the limited time frame, he said, "COMEDK is also about luck since you have 180 questions to attempt in 180 minutes even though they might not be very complex"

Two caught with phones, four fall sick
While the exam was conducted peacefully in all centres, Gururaj R. Bhat, Assistant Secretary, COMEDK said that two candidates were caught with mobile phones during the exam. After seizing the phones, the candidates were not allowed to continue their exams.

He also said that appropriate support services were extended to four candidates who reported sick after the exam had begun. All of them finished the exams. Further, the candidates in the two centres were compensated with extra time to finish the exam as there were power outages.

Key dates are as follows:
May 14 - Provisional answers keys with forms for challenging the said answer keys, May 21 - Final answer key will be made available, and May 24 - Score cards will be made available to candidates in their applicant logins

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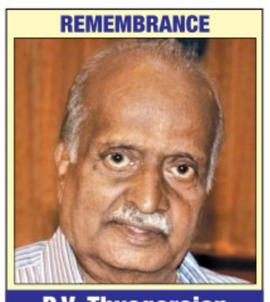

P.V. Thyagarajan
It's been 4 long years since you left us, but not a day goes by without thoughts of you. Your memory will forever be cherished by us.
Fondly Remembered by
Wife: Indira Thyagarajan
Daughters: Janani, Geetha
Sons-in-law: Kumar, Prakash
Son: Karthik
Daughter-in-law: Samaya
& Grandchildren

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This worm develops food habits and its offspring 'inherit' them

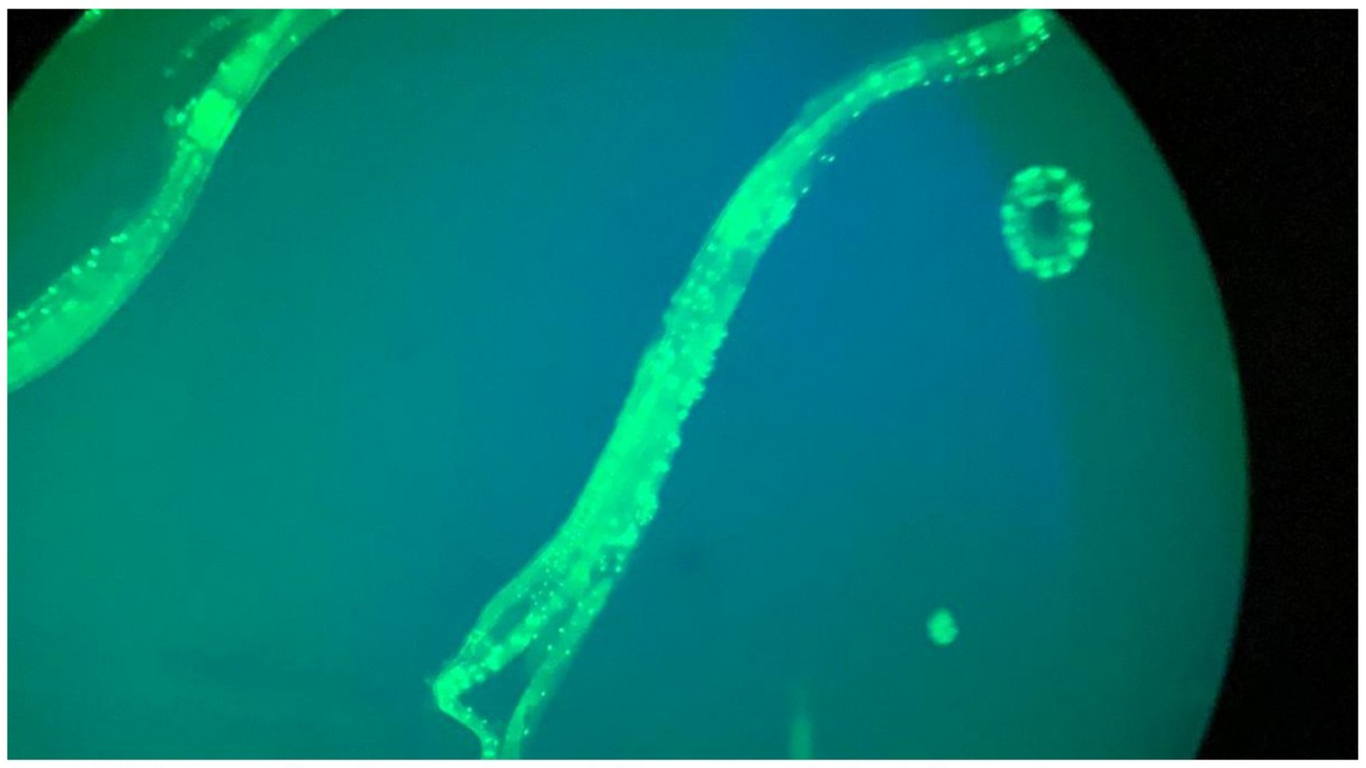
Researchers from Princeton University have reported that after the *Caenorhabditis elegans* worms ate a disease-causing strain of bacteria, its progeny were born with the 'knowledge' to avoid making the same mistake for up to four generations

D.P. Kasbekar

Researchers fondly call the roundworm *Caenorhabditis elegans* "the worm" because of its widespread use in research to understand neuronal and molecular biology. It was the first multicellular organism to have its full genome sequenced and neural wiring mapped. *C. elegans* grows within 3-5 days from a fertilised egg to a millimetre-long adult, and it has informed profound insights into the human body, as well as biology more broadly.

On March 28, researchers from Princeton University in the U.S. reported that after *C. elegans* worms ate a disease-causing strain of bacteria, its children inherited the 'knowledge' to avoid making the same mistake – up to four generations. Their findings were published in the journal *PLoS Genetics*.

Given the mechanism by which this transmission occurs, the study raises questions about whether humans could have the same ability.



Caenorhabditis elegans was the first multicellular organism to have its full genome sequenced and neural wiring mapped. ITI/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS (CC BY-SA 4.0)

THE GIST

P. vranovensis makes a small RNA molecule called sRNA. When the worms ingest this strain, they also take in the sRNA. The sRNA then alters the worm's feeding behaviour such that, from that point on, the worms 'know' to avoid feeding on this bacterium

The *C. elegans* worms' trans-generational ability also worked against the *P. aeruginosa* bacteria — which cause disease in humans

Scientists would like to discover whether our bodies can also take up sRNA molecules from the microbes in our gut or mouth and whether they can modify our behaviour, and possibly the behaviour of our children and later generations

Message in a bottle

Pseudomonas vranovensis is a disease-causing bacterium found in *C. elegans*'s natural environment.

The researchers found that *P. vranovensis* makes a small RNA molecule called sRNA. When the worms ingest this strain, they also take in the sRNA. The sRNA then altered the worm's feeding behaviour such that, from that point on, the worms 'know' to avoid feeding on this bacterium and save themselves from getting sick.

Remarkably, this learned avoidance behaviour was found to be transmitted to the trained worm's progeny, grand-progeny, great-grand progeny, and great-great-grand progeny. The ability decayed only from the fifth generation.

The same team of researchers had previously discovered this trans-generational ability in *C. elegans* worms against *P. aeruginosa* bacteria (which also cause disease in humans). In the new study, they were able to confirm *C. elegans* worms in the wild had the same ability.

Understanding RNA, large and small

A DNA molecule is like a big ladder. Its two side rails, or strands, are made of a long series of alternating units of phosphate and the sugar deoxyribose molecules. Each sugar unit is attached to one of four chemical bases: adenine (A), cytosine (C), guanine (G), and thymine (T). The As and Cs on one strand are bonded with Ts and Cs on the other by hydrogen bonds. These bonds form the rungs that hold the strands together.

A single *P. vranovensis* bacterium has 6-7 million rungs in its DNA, coding for about 5,500 genes. A gene is a segment of a few thousand base-pairs of the DNA molecule. Every gene is instructions that tell a cell how to make a protein.

In contrast to DNA, the RNA molecule is like a half-ladder or a comb. Its spine is made up of alternating units of phosphate and the sugar ribose. Each ribose molecule is attached to one of four bases: A, C, G or uridine (U), which jut out from the strand like the comb's tines. A cell copies the sequence of As, Ts, Cs, and Gs in a gene in the DNA into the sequence of Us, As, Gs, and Cs in an RNA molecule. This RNA is called the messenger (mRNA). The length of this mRNA is comparable to that of the gene from which it is derived. The mRNA moves to structures called ribosomes, where the cell assembles the corresponding protein.

Diet control

But not all genes encode mRNAs and proteins. The end product of some genes, especially small genes that are only about a tenth as long (~100-200 rungs), is sRNA. These sRNA bind to other proteins and RNAs, and either enhance or reduce the expression of other genes.

The Princeton University researchers showed that a *C. elegans* worm took up a 124-tine sRNA from an ingested *P. vranovensis*. This sRNA reduced the expression of a gene in the worm called *maco-1*, which plays an important neurological role. As it happens, *maco-1* is also found in humans.

> *C. elegans* grows within 3-5 days from a fertilised egg to a millimetre-long adult, and it has informed profound insights into the human body, as well as biology more broadly

In the laboratory, the researchers reared *C. elegans* worms on a diet of *Escherichia coli* bacteria. When the researchers engineered the *E. coli* to express the *P. vranovensis* sRNA and fed them to the worms, the worms learned to avoid the pathogenic strains of *P. vranovensis*. When these worms had children, the latter also had the ability to avoid pathogenic *P. vranovensis*.

Good 'memory loss'

Another *Pseudomonas* bacterium, *P. mendocina*, is also present in the worm's habitat but it doesn't cause disease. Instead, *P. mendocina* is a source of nutrition. *C. elegans* worms trained to avoid the pathogenic *P. vranovensis* strain avoided feeding on the non-pathogenic *P. mendocina* as well. The researchers have speculated that this is perhaps why the 'loss of memory' happens around the fifth generation – so they can re-remember the advantage of consuming *P. mendocina*.

The sRNA that triggered learned avoidance behaviour came initially from the bacteria and was taken up by the worm that fed on them. Thereafter, the sRNA was maintained in the worms' bodies, transmitted to their descendants, and maintained in them. This happened through a mechanism called RNA interference – which scientists first discovered by studying *C. elegans* worms.

Food for thought

In fact, discoveries based on studying *C. elegans* were recognised by Nobel Prizes in 2002, 2006, and 2008. This tiny worm has played an outsized role in the advancement of scientific and medical research.

For example, a gene that triggers a process during *C. elegans*'s development has been found in the human genome, and mutations in it have been associated with limb deformities.

So a question arises: whether our bodies can also take up sRNA molecules from the microbes in our gut, mouth or vagina, and whether they can modify our behaviour, and possibly the behaviour of our children and later generations.

(D.P. Kasbekar is a retired scientist.)

BIG SHOT

Afghans gather near a flooded area between Samangan and Mazar-i-Sharif, following a flash flood triggered by heavy rainfall in the Samangan province, on Friday. At least 62 people, mainly women and children, were killed on May 10 in flash floods that ripped through Afghanistan's Baghlan province, in the north of the country, a local official said. On Saturday, the official death toll stood at 153. AFP

WHAT IS IT?

Negativity bias: Why bad news sticks

Arkatapa Basu

Negativity bias is a psychological tendency ingrained in humans. It is characterised by a heightened sensitivity to negative stimuli over positive ones. Thanks to this bias, we notice negative events more readily as well as dwell extensively on them. It manifests in various aspects of life, from our ability to retain memories to social interactions.

This bias is also why a negative first impression can be challenging to overcome while past traumas tend to have enduring effects. Psychologist Rick Hanson has attributed this bias to millions of years of evolution — during which our ancestors faced constant threats in their environments. In these hostile conditions, their bodies and minds placed a premium on being able to spot and respond to threats.

The resulting evolutionary strategy ensured the survival of our species as well as selected for those individuals who were better able to sidestep or survive threats than others. These members then passed on their genes to modern humans, reinforcing the need for the bias in subsequent generations.

Today, the negativity bias affects how we perceive and remember events, interactions, and

Thanks to negativity bias, we notice negative events more readily as well as dwell extensively on them. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

feedback. It explains why criticism sticks much more than praise and why negative news items often garner more attention than optimistic, affirmative stories.

Understanding negativity bias offers insight into human behaviour and cognition, and highlights the interplay between evolutionary heritage and modern psychological phenomena.

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to
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Council poll keeps political heat on as it is being seen as a prestige battle

Election to the Legislative Council from six constituencies will be held on June 3. BJP has given one seat to its ally JD(S)

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The political heat in the State is still high as even before the results of the keenly contested Lok Sabha polls are announced, parties are bracing up for the elections to six seats of the Legislative Council on June 3.

The fact that the elections to three graduates' and three teachers' constituencies of the Council have turned out to be an extension of the just concluded phase of the Lok Sabha polls in terms of political prestige was evident with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar asking party leaders and workers to desist from relaxing till the Council polls were over.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy D.K. Shivakumar with Congress candidates for the Legislative Council election, and (right) JD(S) leaders H.D. Deve Gowda and H.D. Kumaraswamy handing over the 'B' form to party candidate S.L. Bhoje Gowda, in Bengaluru on Sunday.

The battle lines for these polls appear to have been drawn with both the Congress and the BJP-JD(S) combine announcing their candidates. The Congress, which had announced the names of five candidates, on Sunday chose the former MLC Marithibbe Gowda, who had joined its fold after quitting the JD(S), as its nominee for the South Teachers' constituency. Similarly, the JD(S) on Sunday announced its MLC S.L. Bhoje Gowda as the candidate for the South-West Teachers' constituency.

JD(S) leaders upset

Meanwhile, a section of JD (S) leaders are upset over their ally BJP giving them only one seat out of the six going to the polls. Confusion appears to be gripping the alliance partners in the South Teachers' constituency as JD(S) leaders in the region have begun exerting pressure on the party leadership to ensure that the BJP cedes the seat to its candidate though its central leadership has announced E.C. Ningaraju as the alliance candidate here. The JD(S), which had won the seat in the last election held in June 2018 with Mr. Marithibbe Gowda as its candidate, feels that it has the potential to win this seat this time and its local leaders want their State leadership to take up the issue with BJP top leaders.

This apart, the Council elections are being seen as a prestige battle between the ruling Congress and the Opposition combine because of the vast area the constituencies cover. The elections have assumed significance for the Congress as it is an opportunity to improve its tally from the present 29 members in the 75-member Upper House.

The Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister held a meeting with the party leaders at the Congress office in Bengaluru to discuss poll strategies and take stock of the situation.

After the meeting, Mr. Shivakumar told reporters that the party would run the campaign on the lines of the Lok Sabha election.

The KPCC president issued 'B' forms to all the nominees of the party.

Publish list of authorised pvt. schools: Suresh Kumar

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The former Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar has sought to remind the Education Department that its Block Educational Officers (BEOs) have not announced the list of authorised/government-recognised private schools though the deadline of April 24 set by the government to announce such a list has ended.

In a letter, Mr. Suresh Kumar has urged the government to immediately direct the BEOs to publish such a list in the interest of the future of children.

Siddaramaiah rules out CBI probe in Prajwal case

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday rejected the Opposition BJP's fresh demand to call in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to probe the allegations of sexual assault made against Hassan MP and JD(S) leader Prajwal Revanna. Instead, he reiterated his faith in the State police's Special Investigation Team (SIT), which is handling the case.

Asking the BJP why it does not trust the State police, the CM accused the Opposition party of issuing "misleading" statements aimed at causing confusion in people's minds about the SIT, which he said was conducting a "fair probe".

'Faith in State police'

"We are not interfering in the functioning of the police. The police have been given full freedom. We have belief and faith in our police. They are efficient," Mr. Siddaramaiah said.

Defending the SIT probe, Mr. Siddaramaiah said, "It's not that I don't have faith in the CBI. When I was the Chief Minister earlier, I had handed seven cases to the CBI, but there was no conviction even in a single one."

'SIT probe biased'

Earlier in the day, BJP leaders – including former CM Basavaraj Bommai and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok – made a fresh pitch for a CBI probe, alleging that the SIT probe lacked proper direction. Claiming that the probe was not impartial, they accused the SIT of arresting the complainants instead of the accused.

Responding to a question from journalists on the arrest of BJP leader Devaraje Gowda who was allegedly behind the circulation of videos which recorded the sexual abuse allegedly perpetrated by Mr. Parjwal Revanna, the Chief Minister said that "the BJP's job is to make false accusations".

Raghupati Bhat upset over being denied ticket for Council election

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

BJP leader and former MLA Raghupati Bhat has expressed his disappointment over being denied the party ticket to contest the Legislative Council polls from the Karnataka South-West Graduates' constituency.

The party has fielded paediatrician and chairman of Sarji Group of Hospitals in Shivamogga Dhananjaya Sarji, who has been associated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, for the seat. Mr. Bhat, a three-time MLA for Udupi, was an aspirant for the party ticket.

In a Facebook post, Mr. Bhat said he was disturbed by the party's decision. Since 1994, he said, he had worked for the party in different capacities. He won all the three elections he contested for the Assembly. He was denied the ticket for the 2023 Assembly elections. "However, I worked for the party. Senior leaders of the party had assured me a chance to contest for South-West Graduates' constituency. Hence, I involved myself in the registration of graduates voters. Besides that, I worked in the Shivamogga Lok Sabha constituency as in charge of elections for 40 days," he said. Mr. Bhat said the BJP, for the last four decades, had fielded a person from the coastal region for the South-West Graduates' seat.

Don't celebrate my birthday: Shivakumar

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

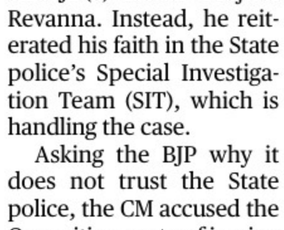
Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday urged his supporters, party workers, and fans not to celebrate his birthday on May 15 in view of the severe drought in the State.

"I urge my supporters and fans not to celebrate my birthday on May 15 in view of the drought situation in the State. Please do not put out any cut-outs, banners, hoardings or organise events for my birthday this year. You may send me your wishes from wherever you are and your love and affection are enough for me," he said in a press statement.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

Speculation continues on 'toppling' govt.

Amid a political slugfest over the alleged sexual abuse case involving Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, Opposition BJP and JD(S) leaders have been building a narrative on the possibility of collapse of the Congress government in Karnataka after the Lok Sabha election results on June 4, which seems as of now like a pipedream given the overwhelming majority the party enjoys with 136 MLAs.



However, in a move to discredit the government in the public, JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy has claimed that the Congress would not only lose Karnataka but is under the illusion of securing power at the Centre.

Taking a jibe at the JD(S) leader's statement, Minister for Industries M.B. Patil *(in picture)* said Mr. Kumaraswamy was "daydreaming" and the Opposition needed a large number of legislators to trigger the collapse of the government in Karnataka. The JD(S), he said, was battling with multiple sexual abuse cases, and not a single MLA would join the Opposition rank to topple the government. Many JD(S) leaders are in touch with the Congress, claimed Mr. Patil, and exuded confidence of winning at least 20 Lok Sabha seats in Karnataka.

Reward for Prajwal's location

Hassan MP Prajwan Revanna, allegedly involved in multiple sexual abuse cases, has been "absconding" since April 27, a day after he cast his vote in the first phase of elections in the Hassan district. He reportedly flew to a European country. Interpol has issued a Blue Corner Notice against him. However, taking a jibe at the State and Central governments, who have not been able to secure Mr. Prajwal Revanna for the last 15 days, the Rajya Janata Party announced a prize of ₹1 lakh for those who provide information about the whereabouts of the MP. The police, however, acted swiftly and arrested a person in connection with the reward and removed the posters on Saturday.

'Misleading video' has KSE upset

The former BJP Minister K.S. Eshwarappa, who contested as an Independent candidate for the Shivamogga Lok Sabha seat, has said he lost some votes due to a "misleading" campaign by the BJP at the last minute. Hours before the polling, BJP workers allegedly posted a video clip on their social media accounts in which Mr. Eshwarappa was seen campaigning for BJP candidate B.Y. Raghavendra. The post was uploaded around 11 p.m. on May 6, while the polling was scheduled for the next morning.

Mr. Eshwarappa was furious as he learnt about the development. He addressed a press conference to condemn this act. Later in the day, he met the Deputy Commissioner to lodge a formal complaint. He also approached the police for a probe into the issue. However, nothing much came of it all.

He continued to voice his protest and even claimed that "many Congressmen" had vowed to vote for him which he missed after the video went viral. He was referring to Congress leader Ayanur Manjunath's statement. When Mr. Eshwarappa announced that he would contest as an Independent, Mr. Manjunath said he doubted if the former was serious. He had also rhetorically said he would vote for Mr. Eshwarappa, if at all he remained in the fray. Mr. Eshwarappa remained in the fray, but no one knows if Mr. Manjunath voted for him.

Nagesh Prabhu
Sathish G.T.

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PERSONAL
ANNOUNCEMENTS
I, B Shanthi, or Shanthi Gopinath Rao W/o. SubMaj B Gopinatha Rao declare that my DOB is 16/04/1961 instead of 02/05/1963.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, NAGENDRASWAMY. K.P S/o Late Prakash.K.M R/at Kodamballi, Channapttana Tq. Ramanagara Dist -562138, I have changed my name to Arunkumar.K.P vide affidavit at 10-MAY-2024 before A.S. Narayana Reddy B'lore-560034

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Pathirappally, Alappuzha - 688521

Oushadhi
The Pharmaceutical Corporation (I.M.) Kerala Ltd.
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking)
Kuttanellur, Thrissur-14, Kerala
Ph: 0487- 2459841, 2459807.
E-mail : purchase@oushadhi.org
P/42/2024-25 Date: 13.05.2024
RE-TENDER NOTICE
Re-E-Tenders & Re-Tenders are invited for the supply of I) Raw Materials and II) Containers & Packing Materials for the period 01.06.2024 to 30.09.2024. Last date of submission of both Tenders: 23.05.2024. E-Tenders can be downloaded from the website www.etenders.kerala.gov.in & Re-Tenders from www.oushadhitender.com For more details, please visit our website www.oushadhi.org or contact our Purchase Division at Kuttanellur.
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BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL
AT BENGALURU
COMPANY PETITION (C.A.A.) NO. 10 OF 2024
CONNECTED WITH C. A. (CAA) NO. 47 / BB / 2020
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2013
AND
IN THE MATTER OF
SECTIONS 230 TO 232 OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2013
AND
IN THE MATTER OF SCHEME OF DEMERGER
AMONG
SUPANGITA ENGINEERS PRIVATE LIMITED
("Transferor Company")
AND
CADM TOOLS AND COMPONENTS PRIVATE LIMITED
("Transferee Company")
AND
THEIR RESPECTIVE SHAREHOLDERS AND CREDITORS

1.Supangita Engineers Private Limited.,
A company incorporated under the provisions of The Companies Act, 1956,
Having its registered office at, No. 7C / D, Bommasandra Industrial Area,
Bengaluru 560 099.PAN: AACCS9673C. **Petitioner Company No. 1 / Transferor Company**
2.CADM Tools and Components Private Limited.,
A company incorporated under the provisions of The Companies Act, 2013,
Having its registered office at No. 7C, Bommasandra Industrial Area,
Bengaluru 560 099. PAN: AAHCCTS43C **Petitioner Company No. 2 / Transferee Company**

NOTICE OF HEARING OF THE COMPANY PETITION BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL, BENGALURU BENCH.

A petition under section 230 232 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with rule 15(1) of the Companies (Compromises, Arrangements and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 ('Petition') seeking the sanction of the proposed Scheme of Demerger amongst the Supangita Engineers Private Limited ('Petitioner Company No.1. or Transferor Company') and CADM Tools and Components Private Limited ('Petitioner Company No. 2 or the Transferee Company') (collectively as 'Petitioner Companies') and their respective shareholders and creditors was filed by the Petitioner Companies on 13.10.2022. The Petition was admitted by way of an order dated 13.03.2024 by the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Bengaluru Bench ('Hon'ble Tribunal') and the said petition is fixed for hearing before the Hon'ble Tribunal **on 30.05.2024.**

Any person desirous of supporting or opposing the said Petition, he / she should send to the Hon'ble Tribunal and the Petitioner Companies' advocate, at the below mentioned address, notice of his / her intention, signed by him / her or his / her advocate / authorized representative, with his / her name and address, so as to reach the Hon'ble Tribunal and the Petitioner Companies' advocates not later than 2 (two) days before the date fixed for hearing of the petition, i.e., **30.05.2024.**

Where such concerned person seeks to oppose the Petition, the grounds of opposition or a copy of his / her affidavit in that regard shall be filed with the Hon'ble Tribunal at 12th Floor, Corporate Bhawan, Raheja Towers, M.G. Road, Bengaluru 560 001 and a copy thereof shall be furnished on the Petitioner Companies' advocate at the address mentioned below. A copy of the Petition will be furnished by the undersigned to any person requiring the same on payment of the prescribed charges for the same.

Dated: 13.05.2024
Place: Bengaluru

***Sd/-* Mr. Raghuram Cadambi,**
Advocate for the Petitioner Companies,
No. 519 520, Prestige Centre Point,
Level 5, No. 7, Cunningham Road,
Bengaluru-560 052
Email: raghuram@cknlaw.in

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of illegal migrants detected in Manipur, as per CM

2,480 Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh said illegal immigrants were detected in the State in 2023 but the campaign was cut short after violence broke out. PTI

The amount FPIs withdrew from equities in May

17,000 in ₹ crore. Foreign investors pulled out from Indian equities in first 10 days of the month owing to elections and uncertainty surrounding its outcome. PTI

Number of people who died due to floods in Indonesia

34 Sixteen more were missing after flash floods and cold lava flow from a volcano in western Indonesia. The disaster hit two districts in the West Sumatra province after hours of heavy rain. AFP

The share of SBI hires that are engineering graduates

85 In percentage. About 85% of the 12,000 freshers set to join SBI are engineering graduates. This development comes at a time when the attrition in the IT sector is going down, leading to lower hiring by such firms. PTI

Number of infra projects hit by cost overruns in March

449 The infra projects, each entailing an investment of ₹150 crore or above, were hit by a cost overrun of more than ₹5 lakh crore in March 2024. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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The poll promise of affordable housing

What is the current housing scenario in India? What has been the history of housing schemes in India? What is the status of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana scheme? Have States also introduced schemes to address the housing crisis?

EXPLAINER

Sruthi Darbhamulla

The story so far:

With the 2024 elections underway, among various poll promises are those pertaining to housing. India has around 1.7 million homeless people, as per the 2011 Census. Even for people with houses, the quality of build, congestion, and inadequate infrastructure remain major concerns.

Does India have a housing crisis?

According to a Government of India report in 2012, an estimated 18.78 million more houses were required to cater to the housing demand in the country. Post this, a study by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) in 2020 found that India's urban housing shortage rose by 54% from 2012 to become 29 million in 2018. This included homeless populations, inadequate houses that could not be upgraded, obsolete houses and congested households. However, an analysis by the Centre for Social and Economic Progress of the 2011 Census data noted that coexisting with an urban housing shortage of 19 million units were 11 million vacant units. Seemingly, while houses are built, none of these cater to the class which needs it the most.

Per the government's definition, affordable housing properties are those with an area not more than 60 sq.m, with the price capped at ₹45 lakh.

In the first quarter of 2024, housing sales were at an all-time quarterly high, with 1.30 lakh units sold across the top seven cities. But in the new housing supply, it was mid-segment homes that continued to dominate with a 33% share. Affordable housing was at a mere 18% share. As reported by *The Hindu*, the share of affordable housing in overall sales during the first half of 2023 saw a sharp decline, to approximately 20% – an 11 percentage point decrease as compared to the first half of 2022. In an interview with *Al Jazeera*, Abdul Shakeel, member of a housing civil society group in New Delhi, said, given the high cost of land and construction materials, "building low-cost houses for low-income people is not economically viable. The low-income class cannot afford the house unless the charges are subsidised." Urban congestion and lack of proper housing create another issue – slums. The 2011 census found that over 65 million people, about 5% of India's total population, lived in slums.

GETTY IMAGES

What policies have been implemented?

A right to housing has been held to be a part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution by the Supreme Court. The first policy intervention from the Government came in 1985, with the Indira Awaas Yojana, which was focused on rural housing. After 2004, urban housing came into focus with programmes such as the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), launched in 2005. In 2008, the Parekh Committee report on housing led to urban housing interventions such as the Rajiv Awas Yojana and Rajiv Rinn Yojna. The Housing for All schemes (2015-22) were launched once the Modi government came to power. The two wings under these are Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban).

What are PMAY-U and PMAY-G?

The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June 2015 to tackle urban homelessness. The PMAY-U promised houses for 1.18 crore families by December 2024. As of March 2024, it has only achieved around 67% of its target, that is, around 80 lakh.

The duration of the PMAY-U was initially seven years, from FY 2015-16 to FY 2021-22. It has now been extended up to December 31, 2024 - with all verticals except Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme - to complete houses sanctioned up to March 31, 2022. Around 83% of the houses to be constructed under PMAY-U are not meant for the urban landless poor, but rather for families having access to capital and land. The slum rehabilitation scheme within PMAY-U has sanctioned only 2.96 lakh homes.

The PMAY-G was launched by the Modi government in 2016 with the aim of constructing 2.95 crore houses. The scheme offers ₹1.3 lakh for each unit constructed under the scheme, with a 60:40 funding split between the Centre and State. According to the PMAY-G dashboard, as of April 30, 2024, a total of 2.6 crore houses have been completed. According to data shared by the government, as of September 29, 2022, over 69% of houses constructed under PMAY-G were either wholly or jointly owned by women. Both components of the PMAY combined received ₹80,671 crore in the interim budget.

What about State schemes?

States too have sought to introduce housing schemes. In the run-up to the polls, the Andhra Pradesh government has undertaken schemes such as the Navaratnalu-Pedalandariki Illu. Under this, the State had taken up construction of 21.76 lakh houses, with an outlay of ₹56,700 crore. Of these, the construction of 7.43 lakh houses was completed as of October 2023, with the State reportedly acquiring more than 77,000 acres of land. The State was chasing a target of building 1.79 lakh homes by a deadline of March 2024. In a press release, it specifically mentioned that the government would register the houses in the names of women beneficiaries to empower them. This is in line with the increasing focus on women as an important voting bloc.

THE GIST

According to a Government of India report in 2012, an estimated 18.78 million more houses were required to cater to the housing demand in the country.

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Why did Scotland's First Minister Humza Yousaf resign?

What was the Bute House power sharing agreement? Why did the agreement collapse?

Priyali Prakash

The story so far:

Scottish National Party (SNP) leader John Swinney was sworn in as the First Minister of Scotland, following Humza Yousaf's resignation from the post as well as from SNP's leadership in April. Mr. Yousaf had ended SNP's Bute House power-sharing agreement with the Scottish Greens, following his party's decision to scrap climate targets.

What are the SNP's troubles?

The SNP has been in turmoil since 2021 over complaints related to its finances. The police had in July 2021 launched Operation Branchform to investigate the complaints. Former First Minister Nicola Sturgeon stepped down from the post in February 2023, and was arrested and released without charges in June 2023 with respect to the police probe into the governing SNP's finances. Peter Murell, Ms. Sturgeon's husband and former SNP chief executive, was also arrested in April 2024 and charged over embezzlement of party funds.

What was the power sharing agreement?

Bute House is the name of the official residence of the Scottish First Minister. The Bute House power sharing agreement, officially called the Cooperation Agreement, between the Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party Parliamentary Group, was signed in August 2021. The agreement aimed to "provide effective and responsible leadership for Scotland for this session of the Scottish Parliament." An important part of the agreement was to address the climate crises.

What led to Mr. Yousaf's resignation?

On April 18, Scotland's Net Zero Minister Màiri McAllan confirmed in the country's Parliament that the government has scrapped its immediate climate action targets. The Scottish government's interim 2030 target to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 75% (relative to 1990 levels) was out of reach, Ms. McAllan said. "We must now act to chart a course to 2045 at a pace and scale which was feasible, fair and just," she added.

The 2023 Report of the Climate Change Committee (CCC), which advises the U.K. and devolved governments on emissions targets and climate change adaptation, said that the Scottish government is "failing to achieve Scotland's ambitious climate goals." The report, published on March 20, 2024, pointed out that Scotland missed its annual legal emissions target in 2021– the eighth target missed in the past 12 years. In her statement to the Scottish Parliament, Ms. McAllan said that the government would expedite legislation to address the matters raised by the CCC and the Bill would retain the legal commitment set for 2045 alongside annual reporting on progress. Scotland's goal to reach net zero by 2045 remains steadfast, Ms. McAllan added.

Additionally, Scotland's National Health Service on April 18 also paused prescribing puberty blockers to children referred by its specialist gender clinic, following which the LGBTQ wing of the Scottish Greens launched a petition questioning the future of the party's agreement with the SNP.

Following SNP's decision to scrap the 2030 climate target, the party's Bute House power sharing agreement ended on April 25. "This is an act of political cowardice by the SNP, who are selling out future generations to appease the most reactionary forces in the country," the Scottish Greens party said in a statement following the collapse of the agreement.

After the agreement ended, the SNP became a minority government in need of support from other members of the Scottish Parliament. The SNP government survived a no-confidence vote on May 1, after which Mr. Swinney won the required support of the majority in the Scottish Parliament to be First Minister.

What lies ahead for Scottish Greens?

Addressing the Parliament after the vote to nominate Mr. Swinney, Greens leader Ms. Slater said that the party's support to the SNP First Minister has always been conditional, based on policies that tackle climate crisis. " I am proud of what the Scottish Greens achieved during our time in government...We will continue to advocate for the fairer, greener, more equal Scotland that they [our achievements and policies] create," she said.

THE GIST

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‘We need to hire and retain more women, build a pipeline of future women leaders’

Chief Happiness Officer at Deloitte India says though leadership teams may advocate for gender diversity, there are questions about whether these values have fully permeated organisation’s culture

INTERVIEW

Saraswathi Kasturirangan

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

Global professional services firm Deloitte recently released its fourth edition of ‘Women @ Work: A Global Outlook’ report. Drafted after surveying 5,000 women from organisations across 10 countries, the report documents lived experiences of women and sheds light on issues around health, safety and rights. Some of the findings are alarming.

Half the respondents across the globe describe their stress levels as higher than a year ago. About 40% of women who experience high levels of pain due to menstruation or menopause work through it without taking time off. In India too, the numbers are similar. Only 10% of women in India believe their organisation is taking concrete steps to fulfil its commitment to gender diversity. 46% are concerned about their safety when at work or while travelling to/from or for work.

Saraswathi Kasturirangan, Chief Happiness Officer at Deloitte India, speaks to *The Hindu* about the pressure women experience to balance work and family, the importance that should be given to women’s mental health and the need to build a pipeline of future women leaders.

Despite more conversations happening around inclusion and women at work, the report shows that the stress levels women experience are higher than the previous year. How do you see this?

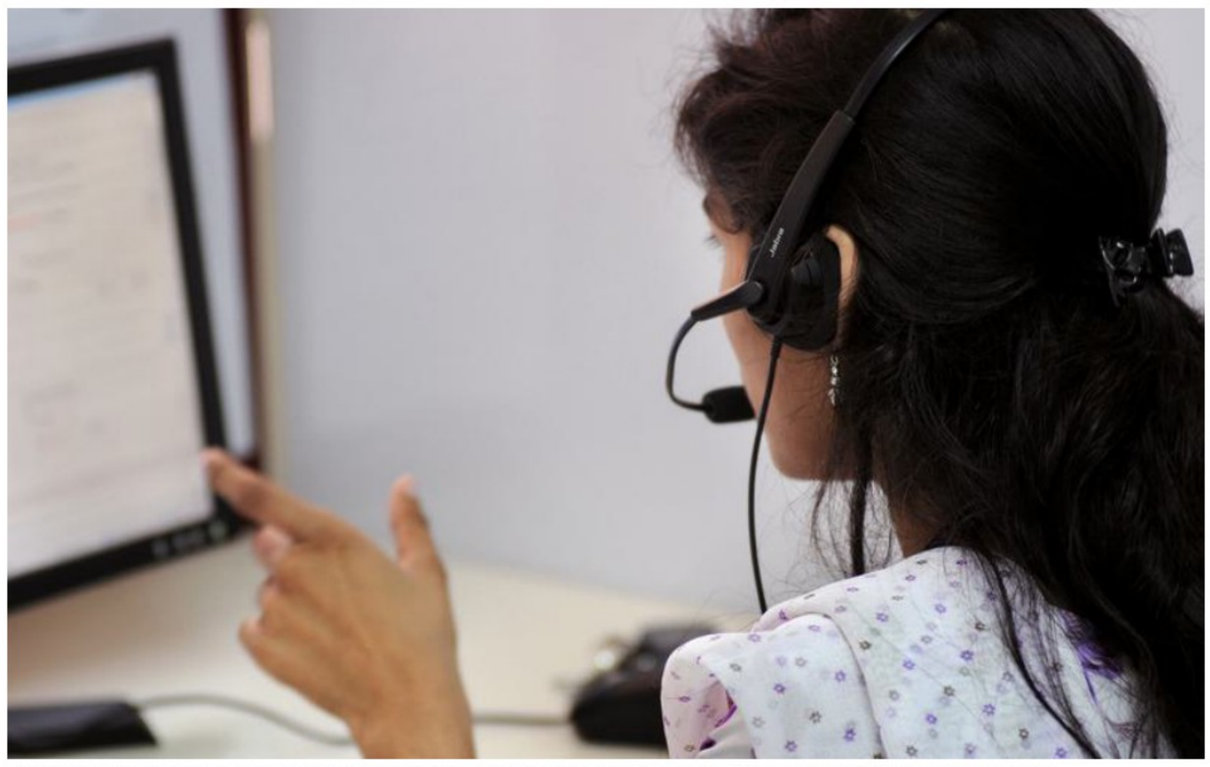
The COVID-19 pandemic introduced a significant shift in work dynamics by enabling remote work for many. This flexibility offered numerous benefits, allowing employees to reconnect with their families and manage personal responsibilities more effectively. However, as organizations transition back to office-based work, this shift has presented unique challenges, leading to increased stress.

Women often experience a sense of “fear of missing out” (FOMO). If they work from home, they worry about missing important projects or networking opportunities. On the other hand, if they choose to work from the office, they may feel guilty about neglecting family obligations. This constant tug-of-war contributes to heightened stress levels.

Additionally, even though leadership teams may publicly advocate for gender diversity, there are questions about whether these values have fully permeated the organization’s culture. At the grassroots level, women might still encounter microaggressions or other subtle forms of discrimination. Moreover, many women face societal pressures that make it challenging to embrace a career-oriented mindset without feeling guilty.

Mental health is another critical concern. The pandemic highlighted mental health challenges for everyone, but women might feel more vulnerable due to their unique pressures and roles. Unfortunately, Deloitte’s survey revealed, there’s still a stigma associated with discussing mental health, particularly for women, who may be hesitant to speak up about their struggles, fearing it could negatively impact their careers.

In conclusion, while organizations have made strides in supporting women and promoting inclusion, addressing these underlying issues requires a concerted effort at all levels. Companies must foster a culture that encourages open dialogue about mental health, values diversity, and supports flexible work arrangements without creating additional stress for women.



’Only 10% of women in India believe their organisation is taking concrete steps to fulfil its commitment to gender diversity.’

Saraswathi Kasturirangan

In India as well as globally 14% women have reported that their rights deteriorated over the last year. Is this number concerning?

Definitely, suggesting that many women feel they’re losing ground in terms of workplace equality. When we talk about rights, what does it mean from a work perspective? Is it that I have a voice at the table? Do I have a career path shown to me? Am I presumed to be less ambitious?

A common issue is that some women are reluctant to raise their hands and ask for promotions or new opportunities. This could be due to a lack of encouragement, societal expectations, or the fear of being perceived negatively.

There is still a lack of willingness among women to put up their hands and say, “I am ready for the next level.” That’s something which I feel women consciously need to overcome. Organizations need to actively ensure that women’s voices are heard and valued, not just by creating opportunities, but by encouraging participation and fostering a genuinely inclusive environment. While organisations should start consciously being inclusive, women also need to understand that they do not have to keep fearing about being right always, and it’s your voice that matters.

Many women seem concerned about personal safety at work and while traveling to/from work. How do you view this?

It’s crucial to create a workplace where all employees, particularly women, feel secure. At Deloitte, we’ve implemented initiatives like “Men as Allies” campaign, which emphasises the role men play in supporting women’s safety and fostering a more inclusive workplace. However, overall the workplace should be a supportive environment, regardless of gender. Organisations must take concrete steps to ensure safety. This includes fostering a culture where unacceptable behavior is not tolerated, regardless of whether it comes from employees, vendors, clients, or other stakeholders. Strong messaging and consistent enforcement of policies are essential.

A large portion of women are still uncomfortable speaking about mental health, pains and discomfort related to menstruation, menopause etc. What can workplaces do in this regard?

I think the conversations are picking up. In our washrooms we had posters which referred to menstruation as ‘those days of the month.’ One of our women practitioners questioned this and asked why we had to call it ‘those days of the month.’ The next day the posters were changed, and the word ‘menstruation’ was brought in. This simple but significant change demonstrates the importance of addressing these issues openly.

Encouraging open conversations about women’s health is crucial because many still find it challenging to talk about menstruation, breastfeeding, menopause, and similar topics. While some industries are becoming more open, others lag behind. A workplace should foster an environment where it’s okay to discuss these matters.

Another key aspect is helping men understand how they can support their female colleagues. The best approach is to ask and not presume. Women also need to feel comfortable discussing these issues, starting with self-acceptance. Self-care should be a priority, but many women hesitate to focus on their own needs. If a woman is willing to mention having a headache, she should feel equally free to talk about menstrual cramps or menopause symptoms. The more these conversations happen, the more normalized they become.

What can organisations do to make women feel safe or comfortable to open up about such things?

Gender balance is a step in the right direction, but there’s still work to be done in achieving it at all levels of the organization. While we might have around 40% women at entry-level positions, this ratio tends to drop as we move up the leadership ranks. This decline in representation can impact workplace culture.

However, the challenge isn’t limited to the workplace. It also reflects broader cultural attitudes. In many families, topics like menstruation aren’t openly discussed. This underscores the need for a broader societal shift.

The report notes that organisations are yet to make enough progress on gender equality and workplace culture that encourage women to move to leadership roles. What are some of the real actions organisations should take?

To build a pipeline of future women leaders, it’s not enough to simply hire more women. Retention is crucial. In many organizations, including ours, we see significant attrition among women at the middle-management level, often due to personal milestones like marriage or pregnancy.

The support systems that once helped women balance work and family life are changing. Parents and in-laws, who might have previously been able to assist with childcare or other needs, are now often working themselves. We’re transitioning from relying on family-based support to external systems, but these may not yet be robust enough to give women the confidence to return to work. This is one of the challenges women face, emphasizing the need for more vigorous return-to-work initiatives. To address this, we focus on both hiring and coaching. We conduct focused recruitment at women’s colleges to ensure we’re bringing in more women at the entry level. We also have a programme called RISE that helps women returning to work after a break. It offers coaching, leadership talks, and shared experiences.

Networking is another area where women feel left out. For example, if there is an evening dinner many women would rather skip it and go back home. So, are there opportunities that can consciously be given to women to network during office hours? Why do we always only look at the evening dinners? These are some of the areas we explore.

We also have a formal sponsorship programme, where even if the woman is not in the room, if there is an opportunity, an advocate for her will call out her name and ask whether she can be considered for it.

Do you see similar efforts within the larger industry?

Many large organisations are taking a strong stand and actively working toward gender balance and inclusion. We may find some remarks saying ‘Oh, things are so easy for women.’ I always tell them, turn back and ask, ‘If you think it’s so easy for women this place must be teeming with them, isn’t it? So, till that happens, bear with it.’

NMAM Institute of Technology team wins Boeing National Aeromodelling Competition

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A team from Nitte Mahalinga Adyanthaya Memorial (NMAM) Institute of Technology, Karkala in Udupi district of Karnataka, won the ninth annual Boeing National Aeromodelling Competition, which attracted more than 2,350 students from 855 institutions in India.

This year, the competition saw an increase in female participation, with 28% of women participating in the final rounds.

Forty-four finalists from 13 teams made it to the finale that was held in Bengaluru. The team comprising Meghraj M., Sathvik Poojary and Sanjana S. from NMAM Institute of Technology were declared winners of the competition.

The zonal rounds of the competition were held in IIT Kanpur, IIT Bombay, IIT Kharagpur, and IIT Madras. The top 13 teams travelled to Bengaluru for the final round, which was hosted by R.V. College of Engineering. In addition, 60 students from Shishu Mandir and Building Blocks schools were invited for a learning session on the sidelines of the competition to help encourage and promote awareness, knowledge, and exposure to aviation and aeromodelling.

The Boeing National Aeromodelling Competition for students across India is sponsored by aircraft manufacturer Boeing, and organised in association with IIT Bombay, IIT Kanpur, IIT Kharagpur, IIT Madras, and R.V. College of Engineering.

The competition started as an annual event in 2013, allows them to demonstrate their skills and creativity in designing, building, and flying fixed-wing aircraft models of different types and sizes.

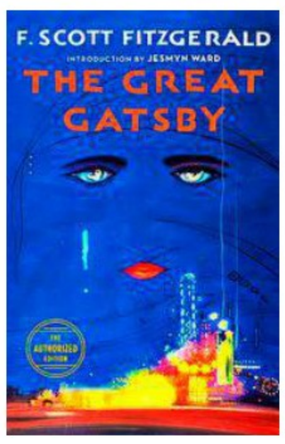
Salil Gupte, President, Boeing India and South Asia, said, “The Competition has become an inspirational platform that complements the aspirations of India’s young aviation enthusiasts.”

When Belgian policemen become Catholic priests

There exists a literary practice where old favourites are given fresh adventures by later writers

ABOUT 500 WORDS

Suresh Menon



Contemporary writers love backstories for popular characters. So too it would seem, do contemporary readers and viewers. I am not sure which came first, the demand or the supply, but it seems to have embedded itself into our culture.

Thus superheroes from Batman to the Black Widow are given backstories - presumably so we can understand their psychological motivations better. This, whether we need to or not. Jack and Jill went up the hill merely to fetch a pail of water and not because one of them was unloved as an infant.

Often the backstories lack imagination or relevance and aren’t necessary. An old favourite, Perry Mason, was given a silly backstory in a recent TV series which must have made his creator Erle Stanley Gardner turn in his grave.

There exists a literary practice where old favourites are given fresh adventures by later writers. These are mostly well written, and respect the backstories the original authors gave their characters. I have enjoyed Sebastian Faulks’s *Jeeves and the Wedding Bells*, and Sophie Hannah’s *The Monogram Murders* featuring Hercule Poirot. In the 1960s, Kingsley Amis wrote *Colonel Sun* under the pseudonym Robert Markham. That James Bond thriller might have been the first of the genre.

However the more popular the writer, the more likely that their main character is given an unnecessary backstory. In *The ABC Murders*, Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot, a former Belgian policeman, was given a backstory as a Catholic priest.

In fact, Christie has been so badly treated by television of late that opposition is building up. Andrew Wilson, a Christie researcher and specialist has told the BBC it should stop rewriting the plots of her novels.

Unnecessary creative license has seen the identity of the murderer changed in *Ordeal by Innocence*. It has made the protagonist the murderer in *The Pale Horse* (despite his killing no one in the book). In *Murder Is Easy*, the investigator has been changed from a retired British policeman returning from the Far East to a young Nigerian man coming to England to take up a job in Whitehall. Why fix it if it ain’t broke, fans are beginning to ask.

Perhaps this is political correctness gone mad. Or inclusivity. But those who reimagine the stories have their reasons.

Sarah Phelps who rewrote *The Pale Horse* said, “Of course I’ve taken liberties. Have I changed loads of stuff? Yeah, of course. Otherwise you’d have 30 hours of TV and would you want to watch it?”

That argument can justify changing the end of say, *The Great Gatsby* so that Gatsby isn’t killed but leaves the city with a hitchhiker he picks up and lives happily ever after with her. Or *Sleeping Beauty*, on the verge of living happily ever after with her Prince Charming stabbing him to death because he complained about breakfast. Or Romeo and Juliet running away to Denmark and meeting up with Hamlet who can’t decide whether to kill Macbeth or his wife. One can get carried away.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 13, 1974

Congress Bags 5 of 7 Seats in Karnataka Council Poll

Bangalore, May 12: The Congress party is set for an absolute majority in the 63-member upper house in Karnataka.

In the biennial elections to the State Legislative Council from the seven local authorities’ constituencies, held yesterday, the Congress has won five, while the other two seats have gone to the Congress (O), according to the reports reaching the Congress party headquarters and the Joint Secretary of the Legislative Congress Party, Mr. M.V. Venkatappa.

The Congress (O) has now lost its position as the single largest party dominating the combined opposition. The Government headed by Mr. Devaraj Urs has had to resort to ordinances, many a time to overcome piquant situations on the legislative plane for lack of an even working majority in this House.

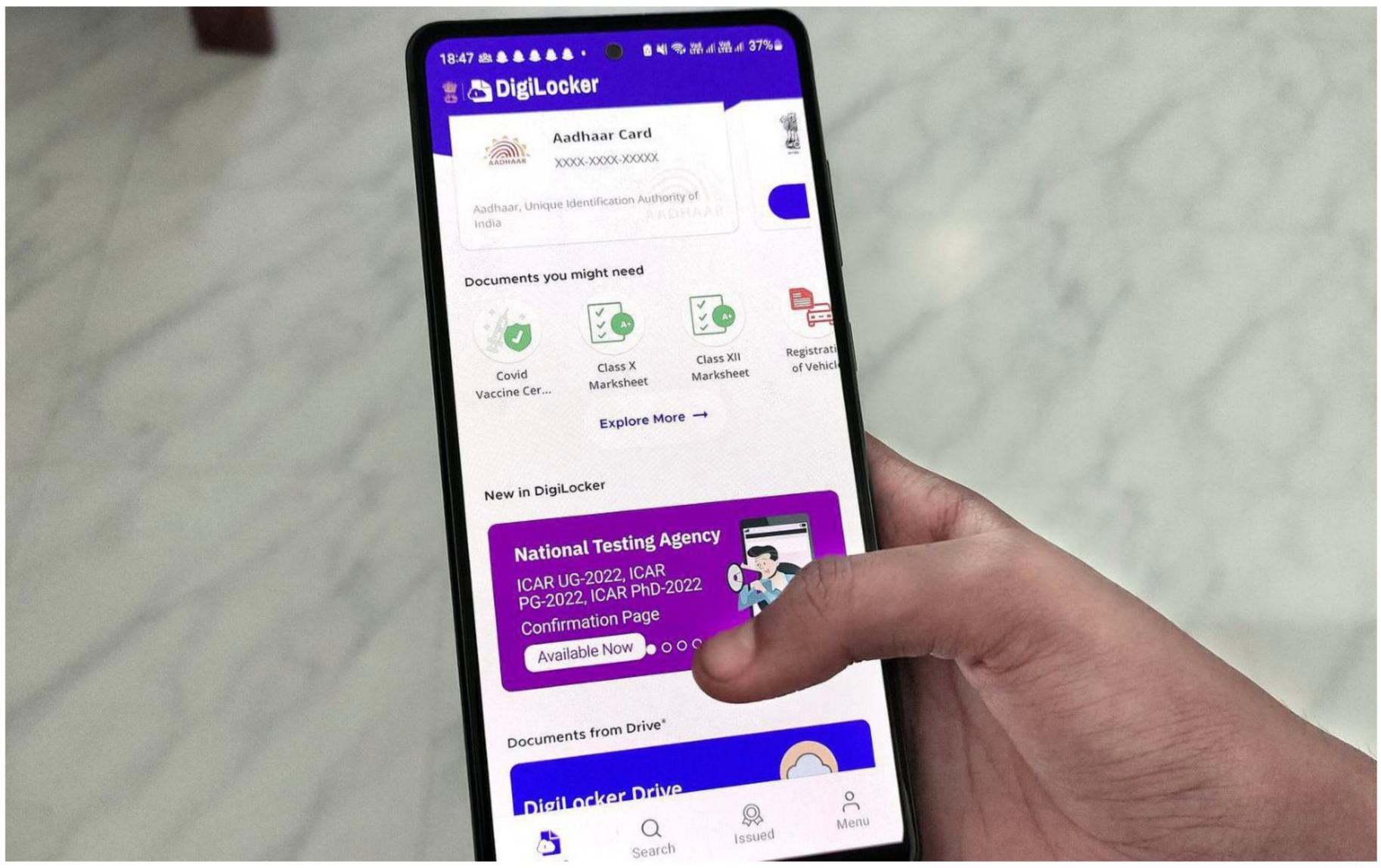
With three members to be nominated by the Government, the strength of the Congress party will go upto 32 in the 63-member House. Earlier this week, all the six Congress nominees were selected from the Assembly Constituency.

There are four more vacancies, two each from the teachers and the graduate constituencies, elections for which are due next month.

An imminent gain for the Congress will be the Chairmanship of the House which it can now bag by virtue of its majority. The term of the present Chairman, Mr. S.D. Gaonkar, who was returned on the Congress (O) ticket is ending on May 14 causing a vacancy.

The adjourned session of the Legislative Council is meeting tomorrow.

CACHE



FILE PHOTO

What is DigiLocker and does it keep your data and documents safe?

The DigiLocker platform, launched in 2015, operates as an app to store users' digital records. As of early May, the app has over 270 million registered users, while nearly 6.7 billion documents have been retrieved through it

Sahana Venugopal

The story so far:

As thousands of students across the country rush to their computers to check their board exam results, many of them now have the option of viewing their scores and even obtaining their verified marksheets through the Indian government's DigiLocker platform. While 10th and 12th standard students from the CISCE board as well as 10th standard students from the State Board of Tamil Nadu can get their 2024 results from DigiLocker, this facility is coming soon to the students of the CBSE board.

What is DigiLocker and who uses it?

The DigiLocker platform, launched in 2015, operates as an app to store users' digital records. The app can be used when applying for a passport, reviewing marksheets, or proving one's identity during travel. The app is part of the Indian government's paper-free initiative aimed at letting users access, verify, and store essential documents in a digital wallet so that they are easy to retrieve and present to officials when required. As of early May, the app has over 270 million registered users, while nearly 6.7 billion documents – like Aadhaar, insurance policy papers, PAN records, and driving licences – have been retrieved through it.

As per DigiLocker's website: "The issued documents in DigiLocker system are deemed to be at par with original physical documents as per Rule 9A of the Information Technology (Preservation and Retention of Information by Intermediaries providing Digital Locker facilities) Rules, 2016 notified on February 8, 2017 vide G.S.R. 711(E)."

Why are users adopting DigiLocker?

DigiLocker is a paperless solution meant to ensure that a user can access the latest and updated versions of their documents online in order to prove their identity and their credentials at any given moment. To the verifying officials, this helps in keeping at bay fake, poor quality print copies, and outdated documents that miss key details.

Also, for the user, this app helps eliminate the need to carry separate sets of documents while they are on the move. Instead, the documents can be fetched or stored in a local device. In theory, these digital documents are no less valid than their originals. Additionally, the DigiLocker website noted that using the app can help with faster service delivery.

How secure is DigiLocker?

DigiLocker is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) under the Digital India programme, meaning it is a government approved application and is ideally maintained with strict security protocols framed by officials. As per the MEITY website: "DigiLocker ties into Digital India's vision areas of providing citizens a secure document access platform on a public cloud."

According to DigiLocker's own website, it has standard security measures in place including 2048 Bit RSA SSL encryption, multi-factor authentication (OTP verification), consent systems, timed log outs, and security audits. However, any government database that stores citizens' information and documents is inevitably an attractive target for hackers who steal user data and sell it on the dark web.

On June 2, 2020, DigiLocker posted a notice about a "potential vulnerability in the sign-up flow," that could have led to accounts being compromised. However, due to a CERT-In alert and another independent researcher, DigiLocker said that the vulnerability was patched within a day of getting the alert, and that user data was safe. As per Google Play Store, no DigiLocker data is shared with third parties and data is encrypted in transit. Examples of data collected include files and documents (optional), your name, email (optional), and user IDs.

What are some issues with DigiLocker?

People who are not used to smartphones or those find it difficult to navigate apps may struggle to download DigiLocker, use OTPs, and fetch their credentials unless they have assistance. Those who cannot read are also at a disadvantage.

Another hurdle is that people with multiple names, aliases, inconsistent spellings, or even slightly mismatched certificates may not be able to smoothly fetch their documents via DigiLocker as the app needs the submitted details to match the issuer's data exactly. Users have in the past complained that even subtle changes such as capitalised letters and initials can lead to failure.

Furthermore, there is no uniformity in how different government authorities and law enforcement bodies in India review official documents. While some insist on being shown virtual documents through DigiLocker, others claim the original hard copies are mandatory.

Do I need DigiLocker in order to get a new passport?

The Hindu reached out to Passport Seva in order to learn whether DigiLocker is a must for passport processing. An official responder from the National Call Centre said that only the original hard copy of the documents and xerox copies were required, and that the DigiLocker was not mandatory. By contrast, officials have in the past urged passport applicants to use the DigiLocker app in order to speed up the application process. There have also been instances where passport office authorities insisted on seeing documents through the DigiLocker app, in addition to inspecting the originals in paper form. Since the implementation of this policy varies wildly across the country, those who wish to complete administrative processes without hassle can come prepared with their original documents, physical copies of the same, and the needed documents/credentials on DigiLocker as well.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on the history of Formula One which debuted on May 13, 1950

V. V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
Where was the inaugural race held and who won it?

QUESTION 2
Which circuit has hosted the most World Championship races?

QUESTION 3
Although 215 different drivers have stood on the podium since 1950, who holds the record for most podium finishes with 197 and counting?

QUESTION 4
Which two-time champion holds the record with 383 career starts?

QUESTION 5
Name the Australian driver who claimed the honours in 1966 in a car designed by him?

QUESTION 6
What unique distinction does the 1970 champion Jochen Rindt hold?

QUESTION 7
Which multiple champion holds the record for the youngest driver to start a Formula One race at 17 years and 166 days?

Visual question:
Where can one see this statue of the legendary Ayrton Senna? GETTY IMAGES

Questions and Answers to the May 10 edition of the daily quiz:

1. Bruce Banner's attempt to save this teenager leads to his transformation as the Hulk. **Ans: Rick Jones**
2. In his debut appearance, the Hulk had this skin colour. **Ans: Grey**
3. Bill Bixby, Lou Ferrigno, Eric Bana, Edward Norton, Mark Ruffalo, Tim Roth. Name the actor who has not played the Hulk. **Ans: Tim Roth**
4. This iconic mutant character made his debut in Hulk issue 181. **Ans: Wolverine**
5. The name of the character was changed to this in the 1978 Television show titled *The Incredible Hulk*. **Ans: David Banner**

Visual: Identify this artist. **Ans: Jack Kirby**

Early Birds: Rajmohan. V| Lekshmy Harikumar| Jyot Prakash Gulati| Sunil Kannada| Saheni George

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

He comes across as a brave man

The two departments in our college cannot see eye to eye on any issue or problem

S. Upendran

"How was your weekend? Did you finish going through the stuff in your suitcases?"

"Managed to go through a couple. Both contained stuff from my college days..."

"Did you come across anything interesting?"

"Come across? What do you mean?"

"The expression has several different meanings. When you come across something or someone, you find something or meet someone accidentally."

"In other words, when you come across an individual, you meet him unexpectedly. It wasn't a planned meeting."

"That's right!"

"In one of the suitcases, I came across several letters that my father had written to me when I was in college."

"Really? Was it full of advice or did..."

"It wasn't really. He basically said that while I should work hard, it was equally important that I enjoy college life. A couple of months ago, while I was going through an old magazine, I came across an old photo of my grandparents."

"I hope you showed it to them."

"You'd said that the expression 'come across' has several different meanings. What other meaning does..."

"When you're talking or listening to someone and he comes across as being intelligent, what it means is that..."

"The person gives the impression that he is bright."

"That's right! The interview was a disaster. Both the candidates came across as arrogant individuals."

"How about this example? She came across as someone who was sensitive to other people's problems."

"Sounds good! Raj takes some getting used to. The first time you meet him, he doesn't come across very well."

"I've known him for ten years, and he still doesn't come across very well."

"That's because you can't stand him. The two of you can't see eye to eye about anything."

"Eye to eye? Does it mean to agree with someone about something?"

"Very good. When you 'see eye to eye' with someone, the two of you agree. The two of you share similar opinions about something."

"The two individuals think alike."

"I guess you could say that! The expression, however, is mostly used in the negative. For example, the two brothers didn't see eye to eye about how the family business should be run."

"How about this example? Poor, Amitabh! He and his wife do not see eye to eye about anything!"

"Really? I was told they really enjoyed being with each other."

upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Virtuoso:
a musician who is a consummate master of technique and artistry; having or revealing supreme mastery or skill

Synonyms: star, ace, genius, hotshot, adept, champion, virtuoso, whiz, masterful

Usage: *He is a celebrated clarinet virtuoso.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/virtuosopro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˌvɜ.tʃuˈəʊ.səʊ/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

CITYBEATS

Summer stunners

TILL MAY 13
Bring in breezy freshness to your wardrobe with chikankari wear. Sonneir is holding a chikankari sale at Serenity. These intricate pieces have been made by hand by the women artisans of Lucknow. Customers can also place orders which will be delivered in a week's time.
At 8/1, Serenity, Jayamahal extention. Call 080-41279127 for details.

Better together

MAY 18 TO JUNE 2
One Foot Forward, an exhibition comprising the work of four artists, goes on display from May 18. The featured artists include Nandesha Shanti Prakash, Venugopal VG, Hemant Kumar and Rani Rekha, and covers a range of art as diverse as the artists themselves.
One Foot Forward will be on display at MKF Museum of Art

Ripe and mellow

ONGOING
This summer, Nomad Pizza has introduced a limited edition mango menu to celebrate the king of fruits. Enjoy the flavour of the season in your pizzas, salads, flatbreads and desserts. The brand's trademark deep dish pizzas will be available as always.
Only at Nomad's Indiranagar outlet at 12th Main Rd., HAL 2nd Stage.

Chidananda S Naik's Kannada short film *'Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know'* will be screened in Cannes

The doctor who makes films

Eye opener Chidananda S Naik and stills from his short film. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Praveen Sudevan

Chidananda S Naik's Kannada short film, *Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know* (2023), has been chosen to participate in the La Cinef section of the Cannes Film Festival to be held from May 14 to 25, 2024.

The section showcases and promotes films from various film schools worldwide, fostering emerging talent. The jury will present the La Cinef awards during a ceremony on May 23 at the Bunuel Theatre.

The 15-minute film, which is a part of Chidananda's year-end exercise at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), includes Suraj Thakur (cinematography), Manoj V (editing), and Abhishek Kadam (sound) as crew.

The film revolves around an elderly woman who disrupts the village's harmony by stealing their prized rooster, plunging the community into perpetual darkness. This act sets the villagers on a desperate quest to retrieve the missing bird and restore the sun's light. Shot entirely at night, the film evokes a sense of mystery and intrigue.

It was not a single defining moment that led Chidananda to filmmaking. Instead, it was a gradual process shaped by a series of events. The first spark came from watching Akira Kurosawa's *Dreams*, a film that completely blew him away when he was in seventh standard. Later, in the beginning of the previous decade, a wave of new Kannada cinema swept the scene. Films like *Lucia* by Pawan Kumar and Rakshit Shetty's projects and others like *Rangitaranga* were emerging, showcasing a whole new generation of filmmakers.

Being from Karnataka, Chidananda was exposed to this exciting movement. This also led him to discover masters such as Girish Kasaravalli and Girish Karnad. This and discussions about world cinema opened his eyes to what he calls "a whole new universe." But his feet had not stepped into that universe yet. He went on to do medicine, which, strangely, led him to films.

"Working in medicine, I witnessed countless patients and gained access to their most intimate spaces. It was a place of raw honesty, where people wouldn't lie. Witnessing birth and death first-hand made me contemplate the profound aspects of life."

While a doctor's life offers security and a wealth of experiences, it also lays bare the full spectrum of human emotions - a constant dance between joy and sorrow. He became deeply involved in these moments, forced to confront the complexities of being human. Those intimate spaces, filled with raw honesty, pushed him towards self-discovery and a yearning for creative expression.

This is how the doctor became the filmmaker. "It was a slow awakening for me," says Chidananda, laughing.

Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know is derived from a Kannada folk tale, which he has been carrying in his heart since childhood. Surprisingly, despite its popularity within Karnataka, he discovered that most people outside the state were unfamiliar with the tale. "My dream has been to transform the myths and folk tales of India into cinematic experiences, and with such a wealth of stories waiting to be told, this short film feels like the perfect place to start."

"The story's core theme revolves around fate, a question that has resonated across cultures since the myth of Sisyphus. Can we truly defy our predetermined fate? My issue is that while we readily discuss Greek philosophies and stories from other cultures, we often overlook the rich tapestry of similar themes and philosophies within our Indian traditions. These are stories that deserve serious exploration," he adds.

Although a 15-minute film, *Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know* threw up a few challenges. "We just got four days to shoot. Shooting entirely at night with limited resources was tough, further amplified by the difficult geography of the location. Public transportation wasn't accessible, so everyone had to carry equipment throughout the night with a minimal crew. Those four days were gruelling, yet driven by an unwavering passion," says Chidananda.

The toil, however, has paid dividends. Chidananda will go to Cannes on May 12 to see his film but, more importantly, to "celebrate cinema."

"This selection at Cannes is a chance for exposure and interaction with other international filmmakers. It shows that this path is open to others in Karnataka as well. I hope to see more Kannada films reaching Cannes in the future," he says.

"This recognition motivates me to keep making films, reach a wider audience, and take them to a global level. That's the ultimate goal. Seeing artists like Quentin Tarantino, Francis Ford Coppola, and Bong Joon-ho break into Cannes with their earlier films inspires me.

"They persevered and took their work to the international stage. I would love to see our films reach that level, too."

'Listen with your eyes'

Praveen Sudevan

The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and the Arts included Andrew Paul's works in 2016. His painting, 'Mighty My Saviour,' was listed below one by the celebrated MF Husain.

Another work by him, 'Redemption,' also forms the cover of a book written by prominent Canadian-based Indian professor, Clara Joseph. But he does not really want to talk about these achievements.

Then, there are some incredible stories. Like how a random Facebook post of his paintings, which he did to get a few likes, fetched him his buyer: a psychology professor in the US, who called his paintings "medicine." Andrew shows the texts of the professor, who had multiple sclerosis.

On another similar serendipitous occasion, he told his sister, "Some rich guy will buy my paintings someday." She laughed. Sometime later, Indian billionaire Ajay Kalsi brought his paintings.

"I hadn't heard about the book *The Secret*. But I always felt I manifested things," he says.

He narrates these nuggets of anecdotes during a short tour of his latest exhibition, Transcending Surfaces, at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath on a cloudy Thursday evening. This will be his final solo exhibition in India before he moves to London this year.

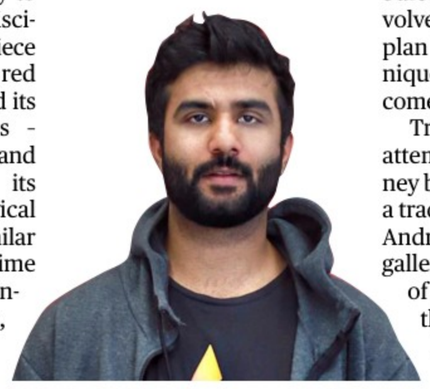
However, Andrew is more excited to discuss his works than anecdotes and achievements. That, he says, is what matters most to him.

His abstract paintings are not easily accessible. One of his works in Transcending Surfaces, 'Memory of the Pandemic', is vertical frames of red paper with horizontal scratches.

"These works on paper were meticulously created during a period of personal anxiety," explains Andrew, "The pandemic had locked me down, preventing a return to London. The news was filled with death, including the loss of close friend's father-in-law to COVID-19 and its complications."

"Each night, as a way to cope, I performed a disciplined ritual. I took a piece of paper pre-painted red (red signifying flesh and its various interpretations - not just pain or agony) and meticulously marked its surface with a surgical blade. The act felt similar to prisoners marking time in the absence of calendars. We had calendars, but the pandemic's end date remained unknown."

Though this might seem therapeutic, Andrew reckons his artistic process is different.



"In both therapeutic and my own approach, which is abstract, you can't completely control the result. It is like an outburst, while my process involves some calculation. I plan the tools and techniques, but the final outcome is always a surprise."

Transcending Surfaces attempts to create a journey beyond the confines of a traditional art exhibition. Andrew transforms the gallery space into a portal of visual contemplation through an interplay of large-scale paintings, video essays, and found objects. His works, marked by diverse styles, delve into themes of time, impermanence, and the fleeting moments that shape our existence.

Sense and sensibility Artist Andrew Paul and his work. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

For Andrew, the idea of art is about challenging how we *see*.

"The exploration of my practice is about questioning and reconstructing the ways of 'seeing,'" he says, "Through a conversation and an interaction via a painting, a photograph, a drawing, or a film." He begins with a visual symphony of colour and texture, gradually building layers that transform into evocative imagery. The artist's choice of materials is deliberate, each chosen for its textural qualities and the unique sensory experience it creates.

This is why Andrew requests – no, insists– that the viewers not take photos of his paintings with their phones. "We are increasingly becoming this society that loves to record than experience. Just come, spend some time with the paintings, engage with it, and see what it tells you," he says.

"Don't just look but listen with your eyes."

Transcending Surfaces by Andrew Paul is at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath till May 15.

Take home a little bit of Nature

A matter of taste One of the paintings that will be on display at Organic Reverie. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Ruth Dhanaraj

Artists from all over India will be exhibiting their works at Organic Reverie, a group exhibition at Gallery Time and Space, from May 17. Among the 25 artists who will be showcasing their work are first-time exhibitors as well as established names.

According to Renu George who curated the show with the team at Gallery Time and Space, the show revolves around the theme of Nature. "We thought a group exhibition would be a good chance for more artists to showcase their work."

"Organic Reverie refers to landscapes and nature and since we are a part of Nature, the human form is also seen in the works on display. While Nature has always factored in works of art, with all that has been going on with climate change, we wanted to give it the supreme position it holds," says Renu.

As many as 57 works by 25 artists will go on display at Organic Reverie. The team at Gallery Time and Space believe in "affordable art".

Renu says such shows are a great platform for budding artists as well as those who are investing in art for the first time.

Organic Reverie will be on display at Gallery Time and Space, Lavelle Road from May 17 to June 9. Call 77603-94808 for details.

Stakes are high for Congress, BRS, and BJP in Telangana

Future of all three parties is on tenterhooks as victory in State will strengthen their hold in Telugu politics; after defeat in Assembly polls, BRS is facing existential threat as many deserted the party

R. Ravikanth Reddy
HYDERABAD

As the voters in Telangana get ready to exercise their franchise on Monday, they will be writing the fortunes of three major political parties at the State level, though their vote is for a government at the Centre.

Stakes are high for all three major parties – the Congress, BJP and Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS). The Congress, which rode to power four months ago in the State, will see a challenge to its government's survival since the Opposition parties have been vocal about its very existence after the election.

Polling day: Election officials at the EVM distribution centre ahead of the Lok Sabha election in Medak district on Sunday. MOHD. ARIF

The BRS is facing its biggest survival challenge since its formation in 2001 in the form of TRS. Losing power to the Congress and desertions of its leaders has dented its image. It faced similar challenges in the combined Andhra Pradesh, but it had the sentiment issue to bounce back and its absence now will be a test of party's resilience.

The BJP has been a minor player in the combined Andhra Pradesh and also the young Telangana State, but it sees a real chance of making it big in Parliament election. If it fails in the mission to bag a minimum eight out of the 17 seats, its growth would be stunted as the party is in its strongest position ever in Telugu States' politics.

The challenges are real for all parties though they may be from different dimensions. In this context, this election is quite unique as at least one of them is likely to lose their foothold in Telangana politics.

525 candidates in the fray in 17 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana

M. Rajeev
HYDERABAD

The stage is all set for polling in 17 Lok Sabha constituencies on Monday with 525 candidates in the fray.

Curtains came down on the high-voltage election campaign on Saturday evening, and political parties are now focusing on ensuring good turnout at the polling stations as every vote would count in three-cornered contests likely to be witnessed in a majority of the constituencies.

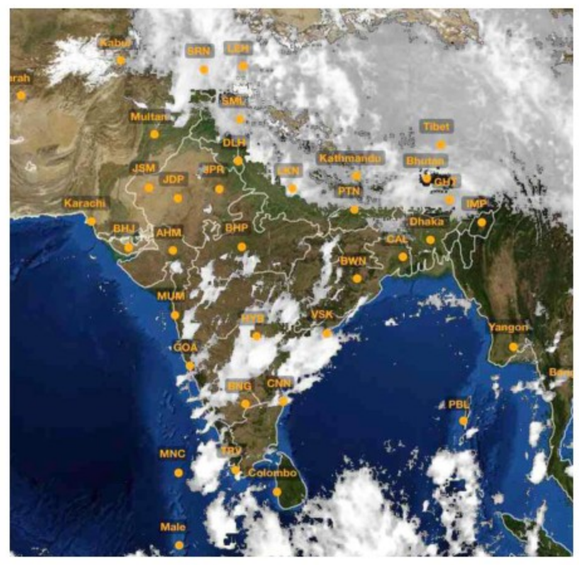
While the first Lok Sabha election in Telangana saw a straight fight between the Congress and the Bharat Rashtra Samithi, the situation changed in the next election when the BJP won four seats.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and others urged the voters to exercise their franchise in favour of the BJP for a "stable government", while Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra tried to explain to the people about the "ill-effects" of the BJP rule over the past 10 years.

BRS chief K. Chandrashekhar Rao conducted a bus yatra across the State and interacted with voters to ensure maximum seats for the party, stressing that only then can the voice of Telangana be heard in the corridors of power at the national level.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over West Madhya Pradesh. Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Odisha, Konkan & Goa, Madhya Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Karaikal, Karnataka, Kerala & Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	4	35.0	24.0	Kozhikode	0.5	37.0	28.0
Ahmedabad	—	42.0	30.0	Kurnool	—	38.0	29.0
Aizawl	—	31.0	20.0	Lucknow	—	38.0	26.0
Allahabad	—	40.0	26.0	Madurai	9	37.0	26.0
Bengaluru	—	33.0	24.0	Mangaluru	—	35.0	25.0
Bhopal	—	43.0	27.0	Mumbai	—	34.0	27.0
Bhubaneswar	—	36.0	23.0	Mysuru	—	36.0	26.0
Chandigarh	—	39.0	25.0	New Delhi	—	40.0	26.0
Chennai	—	36.0	29.0	Patna	—	34.0	26.0
Coimbatore	22	37.0	23.0	Port Blair	2.8	32.0	25.0
Dehradun	—	35.0	22.0	Puducherry	1.5	36.0	28.0
Gangtok	20	18.0	14.0	Pune	6.5	33.0	22.0
Goa	2	34.0	25.0	Raipur	—	41.0	26.0
Guwahati	—	34.0	23.0	Ranchi	—	36.0	23.0
Hubballi	—	34.0	24.0	Shillong	0.4	23.0	13.0
Hyderabad	—	38.0	27.0	Shimla	—	27.0	16.0
Imphal	—	29.0	17.0	Srinagar	—	22.0	13.0
Jaipur	—	41.0	28.0	Thiruvananthapuram	22	34.0	26.0
Kochi	12	32.0	26.0	Tiruchi	9	38.0	27.0
Kohima	—	22.0	13.0	Vijayawada	—	38.0	27.0
Kolkata	2.1	32.0	23.0	Visakhapatnam	—	35.0	29.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.12	.60	.76	125	238	
Bengaluru	6	11	.47	79	74	
Chennai	5	9	.85	19	21	
Delhi	.20	.26	341	303	141	
Hyderabad	3	.30	.34	51	91	
Kolkata	.24	.35	.10	57	52	
Lucknow	6	.53	.22	144	106	
Mumbai	.—	.30	.20	57	219	
Pune	.—	.16	.59	59	56	
Visakhapatnam	.14	.29	.12	39	69	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Byrnihat, Meghalaya recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 271 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 16

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

With meat, parties throw a bone of contention

V. Kamalakara Rao
VISAKHAPATNAM

Not biryani, but raw chicken and meat were the flavours on polling eve here on Sunday. Some candidates were seen trying to attract voters with meat and chicken on Sunday in Visakhapatnam as part of their campaign a day before the election, though the model code of conduct and the silence period of campaign were in force.

Some of the MLA candidates in the district are said to have supplied fresh chicken and mutton to the voters, creating a high demand for meat and poultry on Sunday. According to the sources, this practice of distributing meat to the voters began with the 2019 election in Andhra Pradesh when the candidates adopted the culture from Telangana.

This Sunday, the sales of chicken went up to 3 lakh kg in the Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha constituency. FILE PHOTO

"It is the best way to satisfy the whole family and not just one or two members. Also, it is less expensive than spending on biryani packets and liquor," said a party representative in the Bheemili Assembly.

"On Sunday morning, someone dropped a black packet containing raw chicken. We were told it was sponsored by a contestant," said a resident of Anandapuram. The man who distributed the chicken, said nothing about any candidate or party," the resident said.

"We did the same in the last 2019 election. It is a popular practice in Nizamabad, Karimnagar, and Medak areas in Telangana," said the distributor.

The vendors are also seen making some extra money during election period with this practice being adopted by the candidates. "Yes, we got a bulk order, which is three times the average Sunday sales," said a poultry seller.

According to Veterinary wing officials of the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation, there are 1,242 authorised chicken shops and 700 meat shops in the Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha constituency. About 600 unauthorised small shops are also estimated to be running in the area. On average, 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh kg of dressed chicken is sold here on Sundays. "But on this Sunday, we saw the sale of more than 3 lakh kg of dressed chicken," said a member of the Poultry Chicken Vendors Welfare Association.

In A.P., women voters return saris and seek valuable gifts

The Hindu Bureau
AMALAPURAM

Women voters have returned saris at the house of a village-level leader of a political party, at Pinapalle village in Kothapeta Assembly in Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Konaseema district.

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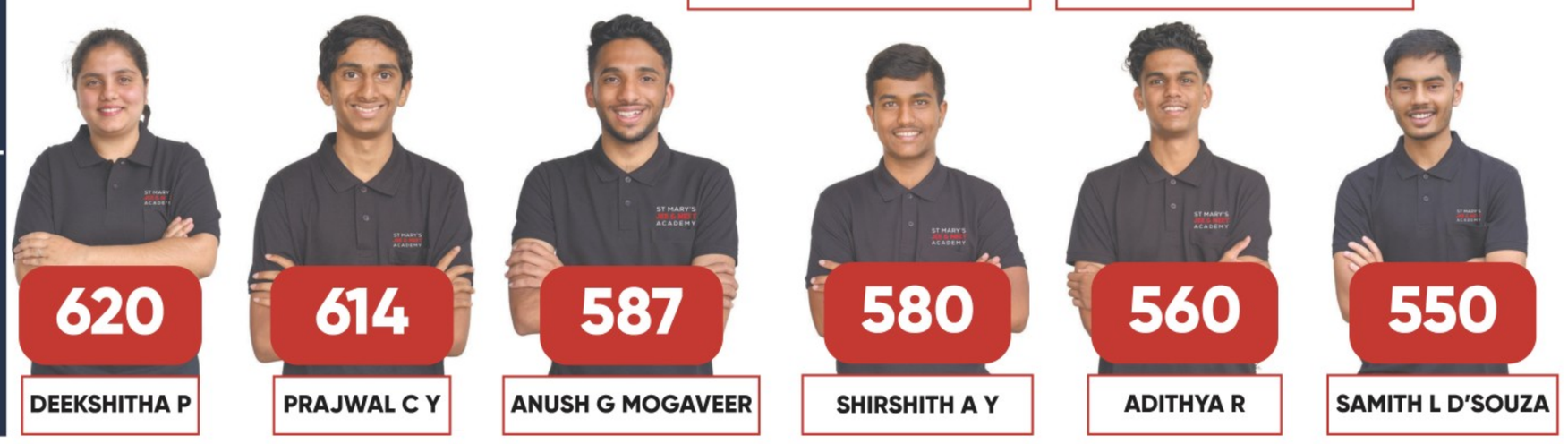

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Teacher as learner

While the Integrated Teacher Education Programme has certain benefits, there are issues to be addressed

Lissy Koshi

The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) has launched an Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), a flagship programme under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This four-year dual-major undergraduate degree offers B.A. B.Ed./ B. Sc. B. Ed. and B.Com. B.Ed. to prepare teachers for the four stages of the new school structure: Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary (5+3+3+4). Admissions will be made through a National Common Entrance Test (NCET), conducted by the National Testing Agency. The test will comprise four sections: Languages, Domain-specific subjects, a General Test and Teaching Aptitude. The programme is already in pilot mode from the last academic session in 42 central and state universities across the country.

The ITEP is in line with the NEP 2020 and the NCTE curriculum and syllabus resonates this. Students who have passed school with a 10+2 or an equivalent stage (pre-university, intermediate and so on) with a minimum aggregate of 50% from a recognised board of education can take the NCET. On completion of the ITEP, they will be awarded a dual degree – one in education and one in their specialised subject – after four years.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

In the institutes that have already implemented the programme, the fee is at least ₹5,00,000, which makes it difficult for students from economically challenged sections.

Challenges

The ITEP provides hands-on experience through classroom activities, field placements and internships. The ongoing pilot study allows real learning and further modifications and improvements. However there are some inherent systemic issues related to management, administration and implementation. The stringent rules and regulations framed by the NCTE will result in the closure of many teacher education institutions, which will be a serious setback for the management, staff and students. In remote areas of the country, this will lead to limiting opportunities and access to education.

Another issue is the fee structure. In the institutes that have already implemented the programme, the fee is at least ₹5,00,000, which makes it difficult for students from economically challenged sections. All this is contrary to the concept of equity and inclusion.

Capacity building measures will be required to foster a smooth interplay of the various ecosystems to implement the policy objectives. The NCTE's curriculum framework suggests that each semester will consist of 15-16 weeks (40 hours per week), totalling a minimum of 96 working days, excluding end-semester exams. On the contrary, Clause 2.2 of the gazette notification states that each semester will be comprise 25 weeks of a five-day working week or 20 weeks of six-day working week (125 days). However, the UGC suggests 90 working days for a semester. This mismatch will need to be sorted out because Teacher Education colleges have to abide by the rules of both bodies whereas Arts and Science colleges have to follow only the UGC guidelines. This will lead to a disparity in the functioning of Teacher Education institutes and other multidisciplinary colleges functioning under the same university.

Yet another problem is the calculation and working of the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC), which lacks clarity. If a student drops out of the ITEP in the first, second or the third year, his/her eligibility for further placements is not clear.

Such a revamp must be substantiated with extensive research on different perspectives of the one-year and two-year B.Ed. programmes, and the four-year ITEP being offered by NCERT's Regional Institutes of Education for many years.

Hopefully, the pilot study will result in feasible systemic alterations rendering sustainability, equity and accessibility to all aspirants.

The writer is an M.Ed. faculty in St. John The Baptist's College of Education, Nedumkunnam, Kottayam, Kerala.

Flying high

Boeing announced the winners of the ninth annual Boeing National Aeromodelling Competition held at RV College of Engineering, Bengaluru.

The first prize went to Meghraj M., Sathvik Poojary, and Sanjana S. from Nitte Mahalinga Adyanthaya Memorial Institute of Technology, Karkala, Udupi. Ranjith Bhandary, Gagandeep Kayara and Shreyas from IIT-Bombay came second. Shishir D., Samruddha S. Aithal, Nishanth Prabhu and Pratheeksha Nayak from IIT-Kanpur and N.S.K. Abhiram, Aneesh Prabhu, Nidheesh and Shainil S. Shetty from IIT Kharagpur tied for third place. This year saw participation from 2,350 students from 855 institutions and the finale held in Bengaluru had 44 finalists from 13 teams.

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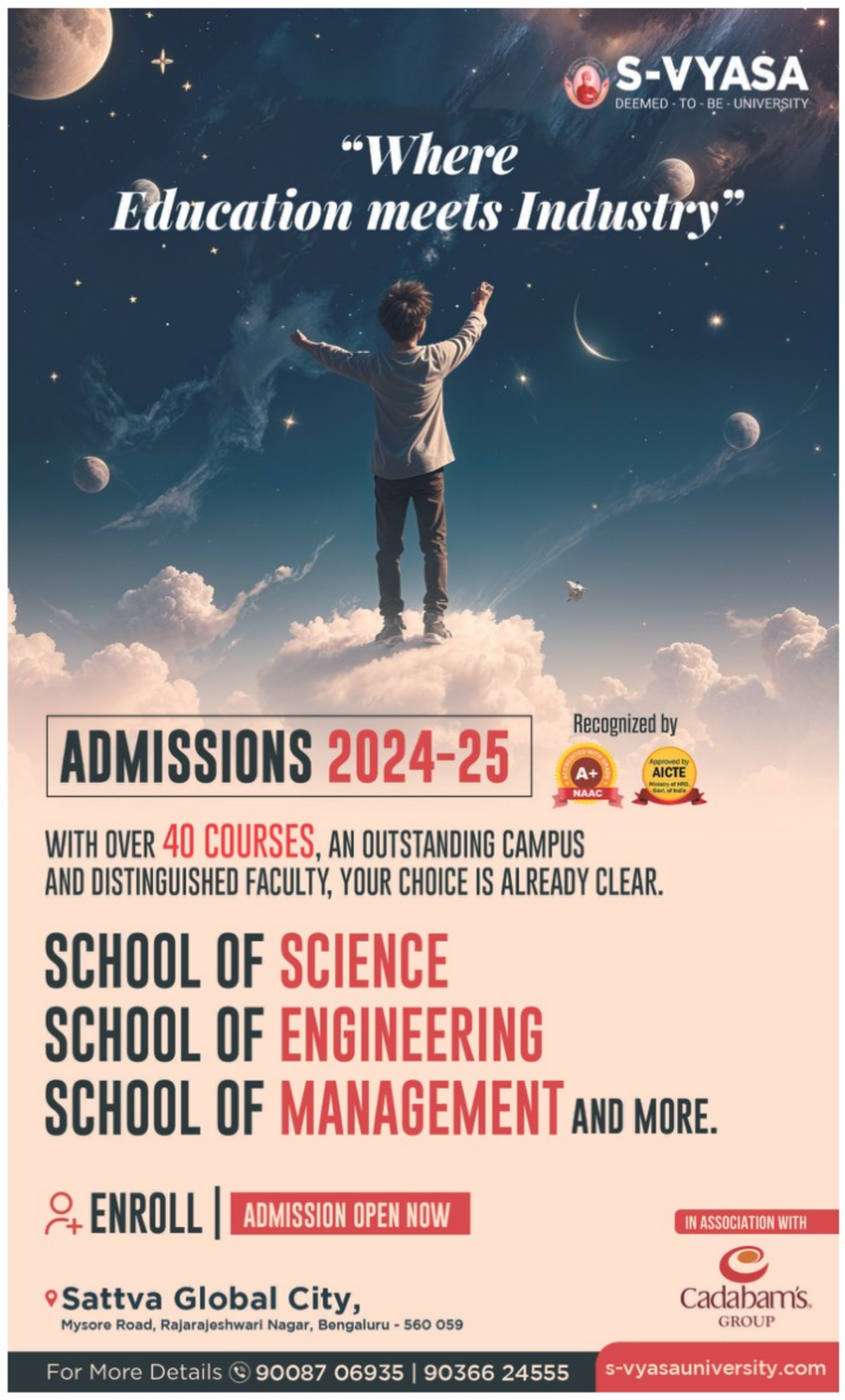
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Modest rebound

The small rise in industrial output holds some worrying portents

India's factory output growth slowed to 4.9% in March from a downgraded 5.6% uptick in February, despite benevolent base effects from the previous year when the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) had shrunk 1.9%. Output from mines slid to a 19-month low growth of 1.2%, while manufacturing growth picked up from 4.9% in February to 5.2%, still marking a five month-high. Electricity generation rose 8.6% but over a contraction in March 2023. The National Statistical Office, which will release fresh GDP growth estimates for 2023-24 this month end, will thus factor in a 5.8% uptick in industrial output through FY2023-24, moderately higher than the 5.2% rise recorded in the previous year. Most of this annual increase came from mining, up 7.5%, while manufacturing saw a milder pick up to 5.5% from 4.7% in 2022-23 and electricity generation growth eased to 7.1%. Production growth was strongest for capital goods as well as infrastructure and construction goods for the second straight year – not surprising given the ramp up in government infrastructure spends to pump prime the economy till private capex recovers.

However, for private investments to take over the economy's growth engine, household consumption signals are critical and there is little comfort here for the second year in a row. Production of consumer durables and non-durables rose just 3.6% and 4%, respectively, on top of a meagre 0.6% and 0.7% uptick in 2022-23. This matches with the 3% growth estimated in private consumption spends over last year, and their production this March was still below pre-COVID levels. Hopes of an above-normal monsoon may prop up rural demand dented by last year's erratic rainfall, although tight credit conditions could impair urban consumption. As some economists have stressed, consumption recovery since the pandemic has been uneven, driven by demand for higher-end goods and services from upper-income households, while lower-income homes have turned reluctant spenders even for fast-moving consumer goods. Job creation and real wage growth for those already employed are imperative for a broad-based demand recovery that triggers private capex. The concern here is that employment-intensive manufacturing segments such as apparel, computers and electronics, furniture and leather products, have contracted in 2023-24, with weaker exports only explaining part of this downturn. The latest IIP data also reflect flagging momentum – growth slid to a three-quarter low of 4.9% between January and March. The next government must prioritise addressing the broader challenges haunting hesitant consumers and reviving platforms for reticent investors to voice their concerns freely.

Clickbait paper

Linking demographic shifts directly to state actions is problematic

A recent 'working paper' titled the 'Share of Religious Minorities: a Cross-Country Analysis (1950-2015)', by Shamika Ravi, a credentialed economist and member of the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) to the Prime Minister, and two co-authors, has sparked a political firestorm, dredging familiar anxieties of a decline in the proportion of Hindus in India's population. Freely accessible, the paper draws on a dataset, Religious Characteristics of States Dataset, 2017 (RCS-Dem), where two U.S.-affiliated researchers have compiled an extensive dataset of religio-demographic changes in 167 countries. By defining 'majority' and 'minority' religions based on countries' official census data, the RCS-Dem quantifies changes in the population of those professing a country's major religion. There is no discussion on the causes or factors driving these changes. The current paper does little other than reproduce this data set, explain it, and highlight – what has been known since 2011 in India and discussed threadbare since – that the share of Hindus as a proportion of India's population declined from 84.68% to 78% (1950-2015). Muslim proportion meanwhile has risen from 9.84% to 14%. They underline how most countries have seen their majority-religion adherents decline. They note that the Indian experience, *vis-à-vis* the proportional decline of Hindus, is unexceptional in the light of broad trends globally. They reiterate that they make no "...causal links between a specific state action and demographic shifts.." They note however that in the "immediate South Asian neighbourhood", this 7% relative decline was second only to Myanmar's 10% decline of the majority Theravada Buddhists.

From here the authors make, without analysis or data, a deduction. That the rise in Muslim numbers proved media reports and UN human rights reports (which they cite) of discrimination and violence against Muslims in India were false. They single out Pakistan and Bangladesh to underline that "demographic shocks" reduced the proportion of the largest minorities, Hindus, there. The authors thus break their own rule of not having a causative explanation of demographic change by ascribing rising Muslim numbers in India to "progressive policies and inclusive institutions." The authors would then have to explain if India's Parsi and Jain populations (whose numbers they reference) are declining due to hostile state policies. Given that prosaic explanations of declining fertility rates across religions and economic migration explain some of these known India trends, it is perplexing why the EAC would lend its sanction to a work that is at best incomplete, and at worst disingenuous.

A well-intentioned study and a demographic myth

Faizan Mustafa

is a constitutional law expert

All is well with the religious minorities in India is the short conclusion of the report of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (PM-EAC), that has also revived the debate about Muslim population growth. Though the report is well intentioned and has been prepared to demonstrate how India's minorities in general and Muslims in particular are absolutely safe and face no discrimination or persecution at all, it has caused a stir.

The timing of the report, its use of almost a decade-old data, its not highlighting the nearly 1,520% increase in share in the total population of Buddhists, and, further, that for every one Muslim, five Hindus were born during this period, that the Hindu population (320 million in 1950) has tripled, and that the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of Muslim women saw a drop by 2.05 as against Hindu women's TFR by 1.36, have all made it controversial.

The report is being used to substantiate the old Hindutva myth of Hindus being in danger of becoming a minority in a country of their own. When Hindus could retain their majority status during the 800 years of so-called Muslim rule, how can they be in danger today? It was in 2015 that the Member of Parliament from Unna had said that Hindus should produce at least four children. With Hindus constituting 79.80% of India's population and Muslims at 14.23%, should Hindus really fear losing their majority status? Demographers see no such danger.

The rhetoric, veiled and otherwise

Some leaders of today, who have mastered the art of polarising voters, have presented it as proof of the so-called 'population jihad', with India in danger of becoming an Islamic state. Let us not entirely blame them. More than 115 years ago, a book authored by Upendra Nath Mukerji, *A Dying Race*, had argued that Hindu numbers were dwindling and might just disappear like the indigenous population of New Zealand. Mukerji was honest enough to admit that there was no actual decrease in number. But then can the higher fertility rate of any group be the only yardstick to determine its status? In fact, higher fertility rates are proof of illiteracy and poor economic conditions. Ideally, we need to look at a group's educational, social and economic conditions to find out its share in the national pie. How the group is represented in the power structure of the state is the real test of its well-being.

Last year, the Union Finance Minister spoke at the Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE), U.S. In response to a question by PIIE President Adam S. Posen about reports in the western media about Indian Muslims, she also used the increase in population as proof of all being well with Indian Muslims. She said, "India has the second largest Muslim population in the world and that population is only growing in numbers. If there is perception,.. their lives are difficult or made difficult with the support of the state..., will the Muslim population be growing than what it was in 1947?"

The Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council appears to have revived the debate about Muslim population growth, but the facts need to stand out

There is some merit in the statement as, factually speaking, India is indeed the second largest Muslim country after Indonesia in the world – as the President of India said in 2023 – and by 2050, it would be the home of the largest Hindu population as well as Muslim population. Indeed, Indian Muslims have much greater rights than the religious minorities in Muslim countries particularly in South Asia. The Finance Minister was right in asserting that "Muslims in India are doing better than those in Pakistan".

A look at population data

But population growth is not the right parameter to judge the group's status in the body polity of the country. In fact, high fertility rates are indicative of educational, social and economic backwardness. Moreover, with literacy rates increasing amongst Muslims, there has been the steepest decline in the fertility rates of Muslims. The most authentic data on population is the Census.

If the Census of 2001 and 2011 are kept in view, the Muslim population's decadal growth declined from 36.02% to 24.04%. In these two decades, Hindu population decadal growth saw a decline from 20.35% to 16.76%. Muslim TFR is 2.36, which is very close to the replacement rate of 2.1. It has seen the sharpest decline from the high of 3.59 in 1998-99 to 2.36 in 2019-21. The Hindu TFR is 1.94 and, therefore, demographers are optimistic of the Muslim population eventually stabilising by the end of the century at 18.8% of India's population. Hindus would retain their majority status by a huge margin at 74.7%.

Even the United Nations Population Fund observed, in 2022, that "the good news is that India's population growth appears to be stabilizing... a total of 31 states and union territories have achieved fertility rates below the replacement level of 2.1." In fact, some studies have predicted (*The Lancet* 2024) that in a matter of the next three years, replacement level may go as low as 1.75. Bihar with its poverty has the highest fertility rate in India. Thus, Hindu fertility rate of Bihar (2.88) and Uttar Pradesh (2.29). is much higher than the Muslim fertility rate in Kerala (2.25), Tamil Nadu (1.93), Andhra Pradesh (1.97) and Telangana (2.01).

Even the propaganda about the alarming increase in Muslim population in Assam has not been substantiated by hard facts. Between the last two Census of 2001 and 2011, Assam's population increased by 17.07% as against the whole country's population increase of 17.7%. In fact, if we take the 1981 Census and 2011 Census, Assam's population has decreased from 23.36% to 17.07%. Illegal Muslim infiltration from Bangladesh is generally said to be responsible for the demographic change in Assam. But here again, as against Assam's 2.91% growth in the first 20 years after the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, Muslims in several other States during those two decades have registered higher growth rates, i.e., Nagaland (10.13%), Punjab (3.79%), Haryana (3.22%) and Madhya Pradesh (3.00%). Indeed, we live in the post-truth era.

A private member's Bill (The Population Regulation Bill, 2019) to regulate the country's population was introduced by a Member of Parliament in the in the Rajya Sabha – it was withdrawn. Rajendra Agrawal came up with his Bill, The Population (Control) Bill, 2021. But the Narendra Modi government rightly did not favour the coercive route.

In spite of an over 50%, and welcome, drop in the TFR in Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath government did propose a population control bill in 2021, i.e., the Uttar Pradesh Population Policy 2021-2030 or Uttar Pradesh (Control, Stabilization, and Welfare) Bill, 2021. Assam came up with a similar policy in 2021. Can we control the population by enacting a law? Demographers oppose all such measures.

'Coercion is counterproductive'

Even the National Population Policy, 2000 of the first National Democratic Alliance government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee focused on more relevant socio-cultural factors such as age at marriage, age at birth, girl education, maternal and child health and voluntary and informed consent over coercive methods. Being a signatory to international covenants such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), India has to abide by the international norms on population control. The United Nations' Human Rights Committee has categorically mandated that state parties to ICCPR cannot adopt policies that are compulsory, coercive or discriminatory. The Narendra Modi government itself in an affidavit filed in the Supreme Court of India in December 2020 had admitted that 'the international experience shows that any coercion to have a certain number of children is counter-productive and leads to demographic distortions'.

If we are really keen to reduce the Muslim population in the country, we must pay special attention to the Muslim girl's education and work towards the educational and economic empowerment of Muslims. If such policies are criticised as 'appeasement of Muslims' and Muslim educational backwardness is not removed we should have no grievance against their higher TFR.

The views expressed are personal

Investment lessons from the India-EFTA trade deal

Prabhash Ranjan

is a Humboldt Fellow, Max Planck Institute, Heidelberg, and Professor, Jindal Global Law School

India's free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations with countries such as the United Kingdom and the European Union (EU) seem to be on ice due to the ongoing parliamentary elections in India. However, before election fever gripped the country, India managed to clinch a historic trade deal, in March, with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), comprising Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. The newly minted Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (which we refer to as FTA) between India and EFTA is expected to give a much-needed leg-up to the low levels of extant trade between the two sides. The FTA between India and EFTA is also important because, as economist Biswajit Dhar has argued, India has agreed to include issues such as environment and labour, which it has traditionally opposed incorporating in trade agreements.

On investment

Another reason sets this FTA apart from those India signed recently with countries such as Australia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Mauritius. The India-EFTA FTA includes a somewhat detailed investment chapter, which is missing in the other recent Indian FTAs. This chapter focuses on investment facilitation issues, not investment protection. But it has a remarkable and unprecedented characteristic. India has managed to extract a promise from the EFTA countries that they shall "aim to" increase foreign direct investment (FDI) to India to $50 billion within 10 years of the FTA coming into force, followed by another $50 billion in the succeeding five years. Likewise, Article 7.1(3)(b) of the investment chapter provides that the EFTA states shall "aim to" facilitate the generation of one million jobs in India. In legal terms, these articles codify what is known as an obligation of conduct – an obligation to make an honest endeavour towards achieving a goal, notwithstanding the outcome or the result. This differs from an obligation of result, which would require achieving a specified outcome. In other words, the EFTA countries are legally obligated to make an honest effort to invest $100 billion and generate one million jobs in India. They are not required to realise these outcomes. Nonetheless, the Indian negotiators need to be complimented for incorporating such path-breaking specified obligations of conduct in the investment chapter, which are typically not found in FTAs or investment treaties. Notably, this creates a template worth emulating in the ongoing negotiations with the U.K., the EU, and other countries.

India needs a clear free trade agreement policy, especially in dealing with international trade and foreign investment laws

Trade and investment

Economic theory has long demonstrated the inextricable linkage between trade and investment. This is truer in a world where the production process is scattered along global supply/value chains, a function of trade and investment. Thus, unsurprisingly, FTAs routinely contain binding rules on both trade and investment. India's FTAs signed in the first decade of this century with countries such as Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore are based on this economic logic. In addition to binding trade rules, they all contain an investment chapter with provisions for protecting investment. However, India departed from this model as part of its FTA 2.0 approach. In other words, India decoupled international trade law from international investment law. This is evident in its FTAs with Australia, Mauritius, and the UAE which contain binding trade but not investment rules. India's approach seems to be to have separate agreements on trade and investment with the same country. This is most markedly seen in the case of the UAE. After signing the FTA with the UAE in 2022, New Delhi and Abu Dhabi entered into a bilateral investment treaty earlier this year. India follows a similar decoupling approach to the U.K., where trade and investment agreements are seemingly negotiated as two disparate treaties.

In this context, the India-EFTA FTA, which contains an investment chapter within the trade agreement, assumes pivotal significance. Can it be said that India has decided to move away from the decoupling of trade and investment law in its FTAs and is going back to the template followed in the early 2000s? It is too early to say that the India-EFTA FTA will be a bellwether for future FTAs.

FTA 3.0

India needs a clear FTA policy, especially in dealing with international trade and foreign investment laws. Suppose India expects not just trade but also higher investment flows from a particular country, which is undoubtedly true with most of its FTA-negotiating partners. In that case, two critical elements must be incorporated into its FTA policy. First, India should negotiate trade and investment as part of one comprehensive economic treaty. Decoupling trade from investment is not a good idea. Combining the two would give India a clear negotiating leverage to strike a beneficial deal. For example, India can argue that it needs more concessions in trade in return for offering something on investment or vice-versa. Second, India should consider expanding the scope of investment issues from mere facilitation to effective protection, with an efficacious dispute settlement mechanism under international law. Providing enforceable legal protection to foreign investors under international law will boost their confidence. This is critical at a time when foreign direct investment levels in India have dropped. A clear and comprehensive FTA policy is imperative for launching India to a higher economic growth trajectory.

The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Surjit Pattar

The passing of Punjabi poet Surjit Patar has left a deep void in the world of Punjabi literature. The " poet of the personal and political", he mirrored in his writings, the harsh realities of existence as also the finer human emotions that give meaning to our lives. His poem, *Hanera Jarega Kiven*, and several other compositions attest his intense personal and political sensitivities in pursuit of a life of high purpose. As a "philosopher of the heart", he kept alive in his writings our deepest yearnings, ensuring that private and social realities were not kept outside the language of our heart. At a time when public and personal sensitivities have coarsened, the loss of a gentle voice as society's conscience keeper is irreparable. The eminent son of Punjab has enriched our cultural heritage and has done the nation proud.

Ashwani Kumar,
New Delhi

The larger picture

While I appreciate the recognition given to the academic achievement of a girl in Tamil Nadu who secured top marks ("Dalit girl from Kamuthi gets top marks in Class X examination", May 11), I found some aspects of the reportage to be troubling. The headline seemed to sensationalise the girl's caste identity rather than focus on her academic success. This perpetuates harmful stereotypes and reduces her achievement to a mere tokenisation of her identity.

The report did not highlight the challenges and systemic barriers that students often face in accessing quality education. It celebrated individual success without addressing the broader issues of caste discrimination and inequality in education. As a responsible and reputable media outlet, the daily must strive for fair, accurate, and empathetic reporting that promotes understanding and social justice.

Kamaleshwaran Asokan,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Clearing the confusion over 'saptapadi'

K. Kannan

is a former judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and presently a Senior Counsel and Mediator

There is a certain misunderstanding of the Supreme Court judgment pronounced recently in *Dolly Rani v Manish Kumar Chanchal* that if no *saptapadi* ceremony is performed, a Hindu marriage between two people cannot be considered valid. The Court did not state the law in as many words, but it did not outline in the judgment that there could be other ceremonies to validate the marriage. It also did not examine some customary practices where no elaborate ceremonies are performed beyond the exchange of garlands or the amendment to the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, in Tamil Nadu, which introduced the *suya mariyadhai* (self-respect) form of marriage through Section 7(a).

The case before the court

The judgment arose in a case involving a transfer petition filed by the petitioner-wife, seeking to transfer a divorce petition filed by the respondent-husband from Muzaffarpur, Bihar, to Ranchi, Jharkhand. During the pendency of this petition, both the parties had jointly applied under Section 142 of the Constitution for a declaration of invalidity of their marriage. In their plea, they had said that they were engaged to be married on March 7, 2021, and "due to certain exigencies and pressures, they were constrained to obtain a marriage certificate dated July 7, 2021, from Vadik Jankalyan Samiti (Regd)." On the basis of that certificate, they sought registration under the Uttar Pradesh Registration Rules, 2017, and were issued a 'Certificate of Registration of Marriage'. The families of the parties fixed a date for performing the ceremony as per Hindu rites and customs. But even as the man and woman lived separately, differences began to crop up between them and the man filed for divorce.

The parties admitted that since there was no Hindu marriage between them, the issuance of a marriage certificate was of no consequence. They stated that the court may declare that no marriage took place between them and permit them to lead their independent lives. This common remedy in law (decree of jactitation of marriage) is possible for reasons other than dissolution of marriage as void and voidable under the Hindu Marriage Act.

All that the Hindu Marriage Act expects under Section 7(1) is that a Hindu marriage be solemnised in accordance with the customary rites and ceremonies of either party. *Saptapadi* is a custom among certain sections of Hindus; it is not universally practised among all denominations. The second part of Section 7(2) says, "Where such rites and ceremonies include the *Saptapadi* (that is, the taking of seven steps by the bridegroom and the bride jointly before the sacred fire), the marriage becomes complete and binding when the seventh step is taken." By no stretch of imagination can this be understood as the only form of solemnisation of marriage. The Court only reiterated what a plain reading of the Section tells us: that the requisite ceremonies for the solemnisation of the Hindu marriage must be in accordance with the applicable customs or usage and where *saptapadi* has been adopted, the marriage becomes complete and binding when the seventh step is taken.

Previous judgments

The law propounded in this case was nothing novel. The Hindu Marriage Act cannot solemnise a marriage through registration alone. Registration is now mandatory in many States, and it is done after a ceremony of marriage is conducted. Tamil Nadu passed an amendment in 1967 simplifying marriage ceremonies. While upholding the validity of the amendment, a Division Bench of the Madras High Court had ruled in *S. Nagalingam v. Sivagami* (2001) that "the main thrust of this provision is that the presence of a priest is not necessary for the performance of a valid marriage. Parties can enter into a marriage in the presence of relatives or friends or other persons and each party to the marriage should declare in the language understood by the parties that each takes the other to be his wife or... her husband, and the marriage would be completed by a... ceremony requiring the parties to the marriage to garland each other or put a ring upon any finger of the other or tie a thali. Any of these... would be sufficient to complete a valid marriage."

In *Ilavarasan v The Superintendent of Police and Others* (2023), the Court approved of the above decision. It found that a later decision of the High Court in *Balakrishnan v The Inspector of Police* (2014), saying that a *suya mariyadhai* form of marriage held in secrecy is invalid, was not correct. The Court said of the High Court's view, "It is premised on the assumption that every marriage requires a public solemnization or declaration... Often due to parental or pressure among kinship groups... couples intending to enter into matrimony may not be able to... give such a public declaration. Doing so would imperil their lives or could... result in danger to their bodily integrity or... a forceable or coerced separation of one from the other. It is not hard to visualize other pressures being brought to bear upon two individuals, who are otherwise adults and have exercised their freewill. To superimpose the condition of a public declaration, which is absent in Section 7A(1)... is not only narrowing the... wide import of the statute but would also be violative of the rights under Article 21 of the Constitution..."

In *Ilavarasan*, the marriage had been solemnised by a few lawyers in the Chambers of one of them. The Court said that a chamber could not become a matrimonial establishment, but if the lawyers performed in the capacity of friends or relatives, their role as witnesses could not be ruled out.

A recent Supreme Court judgment only reiterated what a plain reading of a Section of the Hindu Marriage Act tells us

Trinamool versus Trinamool

The divide between the old guard and the new leadership is affecting the party

STATE OF PLAY

Shiv Sahay Singh
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During the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, the Trinamool Congress leadership is battling electoral challenges from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Left-Congress combine. It is equally grappling with a challenge from within: the divide between the old guard and the new leadership.

The demand for making way for new faces in the party has been growing stronger with every passing day. Yet, the Trinamool leadership has been conservative in the allocation of tickets. In Dum Dum, for instance, it has fielded the senior-most member of the party, Saugata Roy, 76.

In Kolkata Uttar, the Trinamool has fielded Sudip Banerjee, 75. While some party leaders believe that Sudip Banerjee, a nine-time MP, is too old to contest, Trinamool leader Kunal Ghosh has accused him of not being accessible to the people of his constituency, not allowing other leaders in the party to be appointed to key organisational posts, being soft on his political opponents, and maintaining good relations with the BJP leadership.

The BJP candidate in Kolkata Uttar is Tapas Roy, a five-time Trinamool MLA who was keen to contest the elections from the constituency and quit to join the BJP when he realised that the Trinamool will place its bet on Sudip Banerjee, an old war horse.

The differences between the old guard and the new leadership came out in the open in this constituency when, recently, Mr. Kunal Ghosh shared the dais with Mr. Tapas

Roy and said in public that there are two BJP candidates in the fray in Kolkata Uttar: one contesting on the BJP symbol and another on the Trinamool symbol.

These remarks caused embarrassment to the Trinamool. Party leader and Rajya Sabha MP Derek O' Brien issued a letter stating that Mr. Kunal Ghosh will be removed from the post of spokesperson. However, a few days later, soon after Mr. Kunal Ghosh met Mr. Derek O' Brien, he continued commenting on key political developments in the capacity of spokesperson. During the entire controversy, Mr. Kunal Ghosh received the support of several Trinamool leaders who are believed to be close to MP Abhishek Banerjee, who is the nephew of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

The Trinamool has also nominated young candidates such as Debagnshu Bhattacharya, 28, from Tamluk; Sayoni Ghosh, 31, from Jadavpur; and Shahnawaz Ali Raihan, 42, from Malda Dakshin. While these nominations seem to have been made by Abhishek Banerjee, veteran leaders such as Sudip Banerjee and Saugata Roy have been handpicked by Mamata Banerjee.

With the rise of Abhishek Banerjee in the party, the 'old versus new' debate has grown stronger. While the leaders of both camps have engaged in a verbal war of words, this is the first time that the divide is affecting electoral politics.

Months before the election, Abhishek Banerjee had said that there should be a retirement age in politics. The Chief Minister did not agree with this view. While referring to Saugata Roy, she said that the heart never grows old and that one should fight like a Royal Bengal Tiger as long as one is alive. Despite the political rise of her nephew, Mamata Banerjee remains the driving force in the party, including in making decisions on the disbursement of tickets for elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assembly.

There have been several instances, including in the ongoing polls, where the party has fielded actors, social activists, and writers with little or no political experience. Therefore, the debate over whether old leaders with more experience should be chosen or young entrants with more energy and public connect is nothing but a power tussle within the Trinamool. The challenge for both Mamata Banerjee and Abhishek Banerjee is to keep such differences under wraps and not let it spill into the public domain. It is the responsibility of the top two leaders in the party to discipline their loyalists and prevent the situation from getting out of control, as it did at the Kolkata Uttar Lok Sabha seat.

Given the BJP's determination to win a majority of the seats in the State and the Left-Congress combine's effort to increase its voter base, the Trinamool leadership will have to keep its flock together, especially as key seats in south Bengal are going to polls over the next few days. If it does not speak in one voice, it could cost the party dearly.

Number of children has more to do with development than religion

Educating girl children, stopping child marriage, and increasing access to family planning measures will reduce fertility levels

DATA POINT

Vignesh Radhakrishnan, Sruthi Balaji & Rebecca Rose Varghese

Once again, the Muslim population has become a point of discussion. Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi referred to Muslims in India as "those who have a large number of children". A Data Point published on April 23 showed that the fertility rate of Muslims was 2.36 in 2019-21, much closer to the replacement level. The fertility rate is the average number of children a woman is expected to have in her lifetime. A rate of 2.1 (the 'replacement level') means that the population is stable.

This month, the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister concluded that while the share of Muslims in the total population increased by 43.15% between 1950 and 2015, the share of Hindus decreased by 7.82%.

Data show that the number of children one chooses to have has more to do with socio-economic parameters than religion. Government data show that educating girls and not marrying them off early, creating more awareness about family planning, and ensuring access to family planning measures help reduce fertility levels.

The fertility rate of Muslim women varies according to region. For instance, the fertility rate of Muslim women in Bihar was 3.6 in 2019-21, much higher than the 2.0 in Maharashtra. Similarly, the fertility rate of Muslim women was 1.9 in Tamil Nadu and 2.0 in Karnataka, much lower than the 2.7 in Jharkhand and 2.4 in Rajasthan. The answer for why fertility levels drastically vary among Muslim women across different regions lies in how developed a State is not just economically but also socially.

Chart 1 plots the percentage share of women aged 20-24 years who got married before becoming adults against the Muslim fertility rate, as of 2019-21. The trend line shows a strong positive correlation, which means that fertility rates were higher in States where a higher share of women were married off early.

Chart 2 plots the percentage share of the female population who were literate against the Muslim fertility rate, as of 2019-21. The trend line shows a strong negative correlation, which means that the fertility rates were lower in States where the share of literate women was higher.

A major concern is also lack of awareness about family planning. In 2019-21, close to 25% of Hindu women said they had never heard or seen a message about family planning via radio, TV, newspapers, wall paintings or the Internet. Among Muslim women, the share was higher at 30% **(Chart 3)**.

Even among women who were aware and wanted to limit the number of children they planned to have, or wanted more space between children, a significant share was unable to do so due to lack of access to family planning measures. **Chart 4** shows the share of unmet demand for family planning among Hindu and Muslim women across select States in 2019-21. Unmet demand refers to the share of women who want to limit or space out children, but are unable to do so.

In most States, the unmet demand among Muslim women was higher than Hindu women. In States such as Haryana, Bihar, and Jharkhand where the fertility rate of Muslim women was high, the unmet demand was also high. In these States, the gap between the unmet demand between Muslim and Hindu women was much wider too.

Increasing awareness about contraceptive measures and enhancing access to them, educating girl children, and stopping child marriage – all functions of the government – will reduce the fertility rates among all the religious groups at a much faster rate.

Not just a woman's burden

The data for the charts were sourced from the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21)

Sruthi Balaji is interning with *The Hindu* Data Team

Chart 1: Percentage share of women aged 20-24 years who got married before becoming an adult (horizontal axis) against the Muslim fertility rate, as of 2019-21

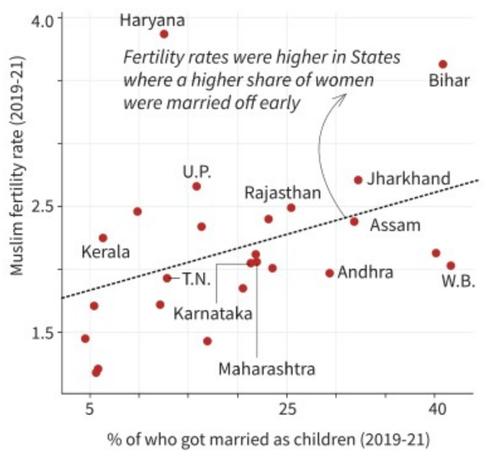


Chart 2: Percentage share of the female population who were literate (horizontal axis) against the Muslim fertility rate, as of 2019-21

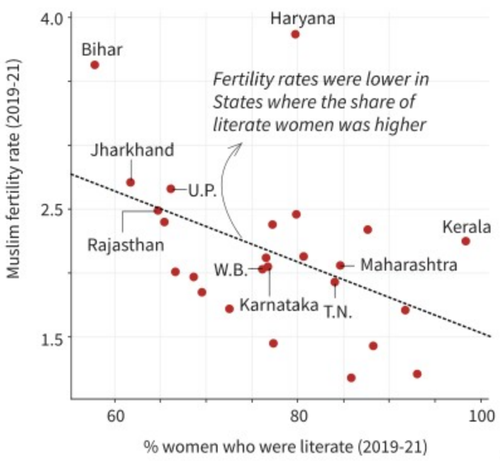


Chart 3: The chart shows the share of men and women who said that they never heard or saw a message about family planning via radio/TV/newspapers/wall paintings or the internet in 2019-21, across select religions

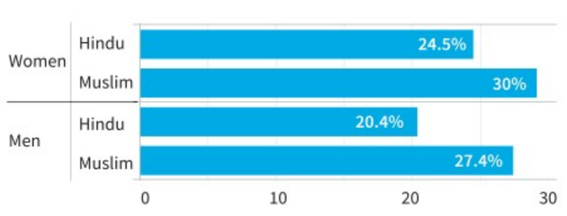
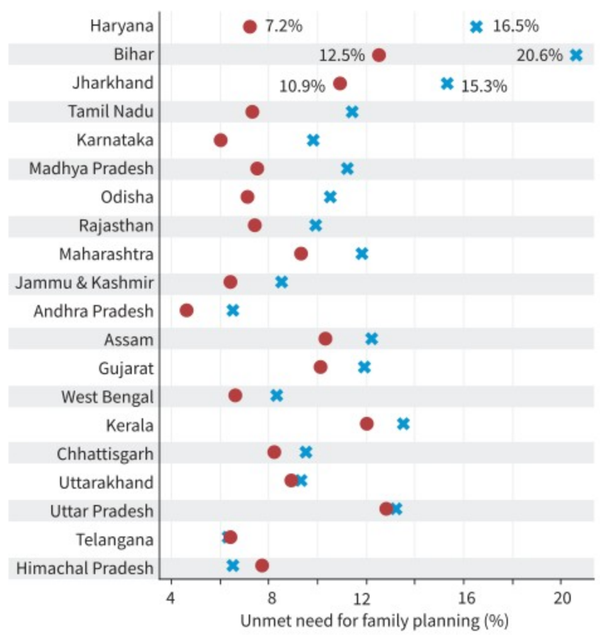


Chart 4: The share of unmet demand for family planning among Hindu ● and Muslim ✖ women across select States in 2019-21. Unmet demand refers to the share of women who want to limit or space out children, but are unable to do so



FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 13, 1974

Calcutta Railway drivers' devotion to duty

Calcutta, May 12: Drivers of local electric trains here have been putting in long hours of duty, sometimes 20 hours at a stretch, in view of the strike, but they wonder how long such an arrangement could continue.

One driver told a PTI correspondent here to-day that besides hardship and operational hazards in view of the cabins and crossings being unmanned the drivers were facing other difficulties as food was not available in stations en route because dining rooms in many places had been closed.

The correspondent was talking to the driver as his train moved to Kalyani blowing the whistle before approaching unmanned crossings and "co-ordinating signals" with the road traffic. The train covered a distance of 84 kms. in about two hours against the normal time of 77 minutes.

The driver said that none of the 250 drivers living in Sealdah quarters here had joined the strike as it would have caused "tremendous hardship to commuters."

In the course of his journey, the correspondent saw the junctions heavily guarded and "controlled" but the communication link among other stations was dislocated as the cabins were closed.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 13, 1924

Bombay development

Bombay May 12: A pleasant and interesting morning was afforded today to Bombay journalists who in response to an invitation by the Bombay Development Department inspected the Back Bay reclamation scheme. The party numbered 150, representing different newspapers and news agencies of the city. A special train placed at their disposal took them round the Colaba Devlopment Scheme, an area covering about a mile and quarter. The scientific and up-to-date methods employed to reclaim the areas on the Arabian Sea were explained to the party by Sir Lawless Hepper, Director of Development, who accompanied the party. One striking feature of the Development Works was that areas already reclaimed were kept free from malarial germs by constant disinfection. Sir Lawless claimed that malaria in the roundabout area at Colaba had considerably decreased within these two years.

From Page One

Fourth phase polling in 96 constituencies today

"The weather forecast indicates that the parliamentary constituencies going to the polls are likely to experience normal to below normal temperatures (±2 degrees) and there will be no heat wave-like condition in these areas on the polling day. However, for the convenience of voters, meticulous arrangements have been made at all polling stations including facilities like water, *shamianas*, and fans," it said.

The EC said that 1,717 contestants from 10 States and Union Territories are in the fray in the fourth phase. The average number of contesting candidates in a Lok Sabha constituency is 18. As part of the arrangements, 122 air sorties have been done in three States (two in Andhra Pradesh, 108 in Jharkhand, and 12 in Odisha) to ferry election and security officials. Over 19 lakh poll officials will be deployed across 1.92 lakh polling stations.

Over 12.49 lakh voters of age 85 and above and 19.99 lakh with disabilities have been provided the option to vote from home in this phase. The optional facility is already receiving tremendous appreciation and response, the EC said.

"As many as 364 observers (126 general observers, 70 police observers, and 168 expenditure observers) have already reached their constituencies days before the polls... Additionally, special observers have been deployed in certain States," the commission said.

The EC has deployed 4,661 flying squads, 4,438 static surveillance teams, 1,710 video surveillance teams, and 934 video viewing teams to deal strictly and swiftly with any form of inducement of voters. "A total of 1,016 inter-State and 121 international border check posts are keeping a strict vigil on any illicit flow of liquor, drugs, cash, and freebies. Strict surveillance has been kept at sea and air routes," it said.

Kejriwal announces list of 10 guarantees

The AAP leader said that he had not discussed the 10 guarantees with the other members of the INDIA bloc as he was lodged in the Tihar Jail but said that they would have no objection to the guarantees as these "promises should have already been implemented for the people of India" and would lay the foundation for a "new India".

The Delhi Chief Minister is out on interim bail till June 1 in a money laundering case in connection with the now-scrapped Delhi liquor policy.

Mr. Kejriwal said the INDIA bloc would form the next government and the AAP would be a part of it. He also said people will have to choose between "Modi *ki* Guarantee" and "Kejriwal *ki* Guarantee". "Modi's guarantees have not been fulfilled but Kejriwal's guarantees are a brand as they have been fulfilled in Delhi and Punjab where the AAP is in power," he said.

The AAP announced that Mr. Kejriwal would campaign for the INDIA bloc in Lucknow on May 15, at Jamshedpur in Jharkhand on May 16, and in Mumbai on May 17.

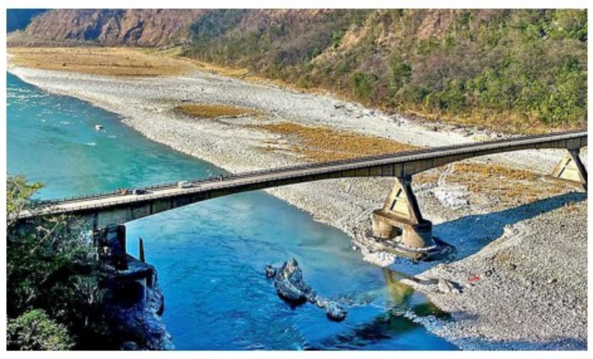
Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva, reacting to Mr. Kejriwal's guarantees said, "Mr. Kejriwal runs a government of lies and does politics of false promises but the people of the country will no longer be misled. No matter how many guarantees he gives, he is only doing it to stay in the news as it is unlikely that his party will win even one seat."

The BJP also said it was "ridiculous" for a party contesting only 21 Lok Sabha seats across the country to be selling "false dreams".

Govt. to spend ₹2 cr. per km on roads along China border

Home Ministry has sanctioned 113 roads under the Vibrant Village Programme in Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Sikkim to improve connectivity in areas along the border

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI



More than 100 roads have been sanctioned in Arunachal Pradesh, five in Uttarakhand, and three in Sikkim. REPRESENTATIVE PHOTO

The government is likely to spend over ₹2 crore on each kilometre of road to be constructed along the China border in Uttarakhand and Sikkim under the Vibrant Village Programme (VVP), according to the project's details.

In the past five months, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has sanctioned 113 roads under the VVP in Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Sikkim to improve connectivity in areas along the China border. While 105 roads have been sanctioned in Arunachal Pradesh, five roads in Uttarakhand, and three roads in Sikkim have also been approved.

There are at least 168 villages along the border with China that do not have any road connectivity.

According to the Ministry's sanction letter, 43.96 km of roads is to be built at a cost of ₹119 crore at Pithoragarh district in Uttarakhand. Each kilometre of road is expected to cost ₹2.7 crore. Once constructed, the "asset" will have to be maintained by the State government.

In Sikkim, around 18.73 km of roads and 350 metres of steel bridges have been sanctioned under the VVP at the Chungthang and Mangan block in north Sikkim at a cost of ₹96 crore. Each kilometre of road construction will cost ₹2.4 crore.

The Ministry has also asked State governments to monitor construction activity by installing GPS-enabled vehicle tracking devices. "States shall ensure the installation of GPS system in key machinery and equipment engaged during the execution of road works under VVP," the Ministry said in a communication sent to the Uttarakhand government.

The Union Cabinet approved the VVP programme on February 15, 2023, to cover 2,967 villages in 46 border blocks of 19 districts in Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and Ladakh. One of the stated objectives of the VVP is to stop migration in the population residing along the border.

The MHA's report on demands for grants tabled in Parliament on March 20, 2023, stated that the objective is to motivate people to continue to stay there and "help to gather intelligence from the people of border villages".

Around 68% of the total villages that will be covered in the first phase of the VVP are in Arunachal Pradesh. The number of villages that will benefit from the scheme in Ladakh is 35, while 75 villages in Himachal Pradesh, 46 villages in Sikkim, and 51 villages in Uttarakhand have been identified.

Of the ₹4,800 crore budget allotted for the VVP for the financial years 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26, more than half, that is, about ₹2,500 crore, is to be spent on road construction.

As reported by *The Hindu* in December 2022, China is expanding its chain of model villages or Xiaokang ('moderately prosperous') villages close to the Line of Actual Control opposite Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh.

Canadian authorities arrest fourth Indian in Nijjar murder case

Press Trust of India
WASHINGTON

Amandeep Singh was charged with first degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder.

The Canadian authorities on Sunday arrested a fourth Indian national for alleged role in the killing of Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, according to an official release.

Amardeep Singh, 22, of Brampton, Surrey, and Abbotsford areas of Canada, has been charged with first degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder.

The Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) mentioned that Mr. Singh was arrested on May 11 for his role in the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar. He was already in the custody of the Peel Regional Police for unrelated firearms charges, the official release said.

"This arrest shows the nature of our ongoing investigation to hold responsible those that played a role in the homicide of Hardeep Singh Nijjar," said Superintendent Mandeep Mooker, the officer in charge of the IHIT.

Nijjar, 45, was killed outside Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia on June 18, 2023.

IHIT investigators on May 3 arrested three Indian nationals – Karan Brar (22), Kamalpreet Singh (22) and 28-year-old Karanpreet Singh – for the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar. All three individuals are Indian nationals living in Edmonton and have been charged with first degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder.

The three are believed by investigators to be members of an alleged hit squad tasked by the Government of India with the killing of Nijjar.

ED summons Cong. Minister Alamgir for inquiry tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned Congress Minister Alamgir Alam on Tuesday to the Ranchi zonal office in a case related to the recovery of ₹35 crore from the premises linked to his Officer on Special Duty, Sanjeev Kumar Lal.

On May 6, the ED searched several locations in Ranchi, including Mr. Lal's residence and that of his domestic help Jahangir Alam and seized the cash. Searches were also conducted at the residence of Vikas Kumar and Kuldeep Minj, both assistant engineers of the Road Construction Department (RCD), Jharkhand.

Mr. Alam, the Rural Development Department Minister and also the leader of the Congress Legislative Party in the Assembly, had earlier rubbished the allegation of BJP leaders about having anything to do with the cash haul.

On May 10, the General Administration Department issued the notification to suspend Mr. Lal, effective from May 6, the day he was arrested by the Central agency along with his domestic help.

The recovery of cash has turned into a big political issue in the ongoing Lok Sabha election. Both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah mentioned the issue in their election rallies, taking a dig at the Opposition INDIA bloc.

Panel flags poor progress in reversing coal mining damage in Meghalaya

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

People living in areas near the mines reportedly continue to suffer due to continued acid mine drainage from the mine pits. FILE PHOTO

A one-member panel appointed by the High Court of Meghalaya to handle coal-related issues has flagged the lack of progress in restoring the environment damaged by rat-hole coal mining in the north-eastern State.

Justice Brojendra Prasad Katakey (retired) underlined the non-utilisation of the Meghalaya Environment Protection and Restoration Fund (MEPRF), apart from the sanctioning of a few projects.

The High Court appointed Justice Katakey in April 2022 to recommend measures to the Meghalaya government in compliance with the directions issued by the Supreme Court and the National Green Tribunal (NGT), which had banned the hazardous rat-hole coal mining in April 2014.

Rat-hole mining involves digging small tunnels large enough for a person to crawl through to extract coal.

In its 22nd interim report submitted to the court last week, the panel said necessary steps need to be taken by the departments concerned for restoring the mining-affected ecology of Meghalaya with ₹400 crore in the MEPRF and another ₹100 crore with the Central Pollution Control Board.

It said that the people living in areas around the mines – most of them abandoned – continue to suffer due to continued acid mine drainage from the mine pits that have not been closed yet.

The committee also said that auditing the source of coal used in the coke oven, ferroalloy, and captive power plants of cement factories was under way and expected to be completed within three weeks.

An audit committee formed for this purpose considered the representations from two coke plants. It apprised the Katakey panel of ₹2.24 crore to be paid by these two plants toward royalty and cess for using unaccounted coal.

The panel recommended the conduct of the drone survey (to locate deposits of coal illegally mined) immediately after the completion of the transportation of re-assessed or re-verified inventoried coal to the Coal India Limited-designated depots.

Cloud of discontent hangs over coal project in Birbhum

Shiv Sahay Singh
BIRBHUM

Stone quarries around the village seem to be working round the clock, adding to its dust cover. SHIV SAHAY SINGH

Days before the Birbhum Lok Sabha constituency in West Bengal goes to polls, the villagers around the proposed Deocha Pachami coal mine project got an interesting handbill from the Trinamool Congress leadership.

The handbill, with a photograph of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, said that the Trinamool would ensure *pucca* houses for the people after its victory in the Lok Sabha election. The handbill had three fields where the people could write their names, the name of their village, and their phone number. A telephone number was also provided on the pamphlet for the villagers to call to express their consent to receiving a house.

The handbill has amused villagers at Kendrapara in the Bharkata area that falls under the proposed Deocha Pachami coal mine project. Sushil Murmu, a youth from the village, feels that the handbill is an attempt to convince the people to give up their land for the proposed coal mining project.

"We will not give away our land. I was not at home when these handbills were circulated. If I had seen the Trinamool leaders circulating such handbills, I would have objected," he said.

Trinamool flags are hung at various places in the remote village, which is enveloped by a thick layer of dust. The village is surrounded by scores of stone quarries, which seem to be grinding stones in stone chips round the clock.

Big project, big trouble

The West Bengal government's ambitious ₹35,000 crore Deocha Pachami coal block mining project at Mohammad Bazar has been facing protests over land acquisition.

The State government is planning to start mining at the coal block, considered to be the largest in the country with reserves of around 1,198 million tonnes of coal and 1,400 million cubic metres of basalt, spread over an area of 12.31 sq. km (around 3,400 acres). There are around 12 villages in the project area with a population of over 21,000, comprising Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Chief Minister has assured them that there will be no forcible land acquisition for the project.

"The people who are living in the villages are not giving up their land. Only those who own land but do not live here have agreed," Mukhi Soren, an elderly lady of Kendrapara village, said. Sitting in the shade of a jackfruit tree, laden with fruits, the women say that the village has been their home for generations.

Both Ms. Soren and Mr. Murmu are part of the Gram Sava Sammonnya Hool Committee (GSSHC), which insists that under the Panchayat Act, there should be gram sabhas in tribal-dominated areas that alone have powers to give consent for land acquisition. "*Lok Sabha noi, Vidhan Sabha noi, Gram Sabha* [It is not about Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha but Gram Sabha]," they say, adding that such gram committees have come up in several villages of the neighbourhood.

Though the Deocha Pachami coal mine has turned out to be a major prestige issue for Ms. Banerjee, the party has decided to go slow on the project and not raise it during the election.

In 2022, the State government announced a revised relief and rehabilitation (R&R) package for those willing to give up land, promising double the market value along with 100% solatium as land cost (i.e., around ₹13 lakh per bigha). The State government added that one member of every family would be provided with a job as junior police constable and the built-up area of the individual houses would be provided to all families.

Pollution and illness

Udvas Das, a Kolkata-based activist who supports the GSSHC, said about 43% of the population inhabiting the area that falls under the proposed coal mine are tribals. Mr. Das alleged that stone quarrying is being allowed at a rapid pace to clear the topsoil and make it easier to extract coal.

About a hundred metres from the house of Ms. Soren and Mr. Murmu is Bharkata Primary Health and Wellness Centre. Medicinal plants dot the area around the entrance of the medical centre but the doctors and supporting medical staff here want the facility to be shifted elsewhere because of the constant pollution from the stone quarries.

A doctor at the medical facility said that 250 stone crushers and 150 stone quarries work round the clock in the area. "In the past few months, we have treated three cases of silicosis in the area," the doctor said.

The doctor and the other subordinate health staff said there could be many more hidden cases of silicosis in the village. "Whenever we have a health screening camp, we find that people with suspected silicosis do not turn up. I think that some owners of the stone quarries may be preventing locals from attending the check-up," the doctor said.

Birbhum Lok Sabha seat is witnessing an interesting contest between three-time MP of Trinamool Shatabdi Roy, the BJP's Debtanu Bhattachrya and Left-supported Congress candidate Milton Rashid.

'With neighbour like China, we have to learn to compete'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

S. Jaishankar

Boosting India's domestic manufacturing and the overall economy will provide much more resources in its foreign policy toolkit to expand the country's influence globally and compete with China on the economic front, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.

In an interview to PTI, Mr. Jaishankar said India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been focusing on enhancing domestic manufacturing as there was a neglect of the sector before 2014 that created many problems for the country.

He also suggested that lack of focus in the past on the manufacturing sector is linked to the upward trajectory in India-China trade notwithstanding New Delhi's approach that normalisation of ties with Beijing is dependent on resolution of the eastern Ladakh border row.

"We need to be confident. I am clear that international politics, international relations are competitive. I have a neighbour like China. I have to learn to compete," he said.

His response came to a query on why India's bilateral trade volume with China is going up when New Delhi has been insisting that the ties cannot be normal if the border situation is abnormal. He suggested that such a scenario has arisen as adequate attention to the manufacturing sector was not given before 2014 in the country.

ELECTIONS 2024

Dismal women representation in Phase 5 too

The representation of women in the Lok Sabha election continues to remain dismally low, as only about 12% of the candidates in the fray in the fifth phase are women, according to an analysis by election rights body Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).

The analysis also showed that nearly 23% have declared criminal cases against them and about 18% have serious criminal cases pending.

Out of the total 695 candidates in the fifth phase on May 20, only 82 are women, the ADR said.

In the first phase, 135 (8%) female candidates contested while 100 (8%) women candidates fought in the second phase. In the third and fourth phase, 123 (9%) and 170 (10%) female candidates were in the fray. PTI

The ADR said that out of the total 695 candidates in the fifth phase, only 82 are women. PTI

BJP MP, nominee spar over ticket distribution

The BJP nominee for Gujarat's Amreli Lok Sabha seat, Bharat Sutariya, and incumbent MP Naran Kachhadia have got into a spat after the latter attributed poor voter turnout in the constituency to the party's selection of candidate.

Mr. Sutariya on Sunday hit back at Mr. Kachhadia, accusing the MP of "insulting" the BJP's top leadership and its parliamentary Board by questioning his selection.

Of the 26 Lok Sabha seats in Gujarat, 25 went to the polls in the third phase on May 7 and registered an average voter turnout of 60.13%. Amreli in the Saurashtra region saw the lowest polling at 50.29%.

In Amreli, the BJP had dropped three-time MP Mr. Kachhadia and nominated Mr. Sutariya, president of the Amreli district panchayat. PTI

"Met Kejriwal and apprised him of poll activities of North East Delhi... Together we are going to overthrow the dictatorship

KANHAIYA KUMAR
Congress candidate

Scribe thrashed at Shah's rally, alleges Congress

The Congress alleged on Sunday that a journalist was beaten up at Union Minister Amit Shah's rally in Rae Bareli for talking to women who told him that they were paid to attend the event. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra shared a video of the journalist in hospital on X. PTI

"To those who were trying to write the epitaph of the Left in Bengal...I tell them they may have spoken too soon. 'Resurrection' is now our keyword

MOHAMMED SALIM
CPI(M) West Bengal secretary

Srinagar sees highest number of contestants in 30 years

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

The Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency, where polling will be held on Monday, has registered the highest number of candidates in 30 years this time.

There are as many as 24 candidates, including one woman, Waheeda Tabasum Shah; cancer surgeon Ashraf Qazi; and social media influencer Jibran Firdous Dar. An official said 39 people had filed nomination papers, but those of 10 were rejected during scrutiny. Of the remaining 29, five withdrew their candidature later.

There were 11 candidates in the fray in 1996, 10 in 1999, 13 in 2004, 15 in 2009, 14 in 2014, and 12 in 2019.

Prominent candidates include Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi of the National Conference; Waheed-ur- Rehman Para of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP); and Mohammad Ashraf Mir of the J&K Apni Party (JKAP).

Mr. Mehdi had been a legislator from Budgam and served as a Minister in the NC government in the erstwhile State. Mr. Parra won the 2020 District Development Council election from Pulwama. Mr. Mir had been a PDP legislator.

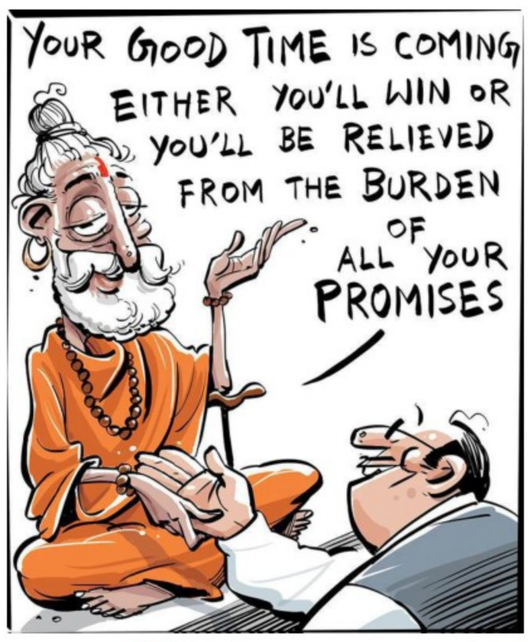
A record number of 1,556 poll rallies were allowed and 271 rejected in the constituency, which saw many firsts this time. There were an average over two-dozen rallies a day, official sources said. "I would attend three to seven daily. It was hectic, and the day would start early at 7 a.m. and end around 11 p.m.," Mr. Mehdi told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Parra held a record number of late-evening campaigns in the highly volatile and previously militancy-dominated pockets of Pulwama and Ganderbal. He organised a long *mashaal* (flame torch) rally to conclude his campaign on Friday. "I was encouraged by the youth's enthusiasm and participation. It egged me on," he said.

A total of 17,47,810 lakh voters, including 8,75,938 men and 8,71,808 women, are registered in the constituency. A total of 2,135 polling stations have been set up in Srinagar, Pulwama, Budgam, Ganderbal and Shopian districts. More than 8,500 polling staff, including reserve staff, will be deployed.

An official said 20 polling booths will be managed by women, also called "pink polling stations", 18 polling booths will be manned by people with disabilities, and 17 by youth. "There will be 21 green polling stations to spread messages about environmental conservation," the officials said. "All polling stations in the fourth phase will have CCTV cameras for webcasting to the control rooms. There are a few polling stations which fall in communication shadow areas. Suitable alternative arrangements by providing satellite phones, wireless sets and special runners have been put in place," an official said.

CARTOONSCAPE | SOUMYADIP SINHA



Pressure or posturing? Curious case of BSP leader Akash Anand's removal

Party's former national coordinator was sacked from the post by Mayawati after he was booked for violating the poll code; his removal in the middle of the election process is being seen as the BSP's surrender to the BJP, which will help the Samajwadi Party-Congress alliance in Uttar Pradesh

NEWS ANALYSIS

Anuj Kumar
GHAZIABAD

"We also have a fair and handsome young man who could answer political opponents and the media in their language." This was the impression of a senior Bahujan Samaj Party leader in western Uttar Pradesh about the party's then-national coordinator Akash Anand when he addressed a rally in Ghaziabad on April 7.

A month later, Mr. Anand, who completed a postgraduate degree in London before joining politics, was sacked from the position by his aunt and BSP supremo Mayawati, after he was booked for a model poll code violation for using abusive language against the ruling BJP in his speeches.

Party sources are quiet on their party chief's decision to remove Mr. Anand till "he becomes mature", but they do point out the parts of Mr. Anand's speeches that were not unparliamentary and seemed politically mature.

A look at his speeches, right from the Ghaziabad rally, indicates that he was targeting the BJP much more pointedly than the Samajwadi Party. He questioned the "financial prudence" of the BJP's ration doles, and described it is "an opium that is being fed to 80 crore Indians". He went on to make impromptu calculations to tell the audience that they would have eaten much better had the government ensured even Class 4 jobs for them. "You would have made at least ₹2.5 lakh a year but now you are getting, at the most, ₹12,000 a year in the form of ration." He alleged that ₹2 lakh crore of people's taxes go into feeding 80 crore Indians. "This tax money, which should have gone into making schools, hospitals, and providing clean water, is being spent on ration," he noted.

He also underlined that the BSP is the only party which came out clean in the recent revelation of electoral bond scheme data. It was only after he felt that the audience was not responding to his maths and English phrases that he would switch to a more aggressive tone, perhaps to match the emerging competition from Chandra Shekhar Azad of the Azad Samaj Party.

Major change: A file photo of Akash Anand, nephew of Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati, addressing a meeting in the Nagina constituency of Bijnor district. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

'BJP's B-team'

Observers said that his speeches did not go down well with the ruling dispensation. It also pushed the right-wing ecosystem to question the source of the BSP's funding. Mr. Anand's removal in the middle of the election process is being seen as the BSP's surrender to the BJP, which will help the Samajwadi Party-Congress alliance. Now there is no fig leaf left for the BSP to hide behind as far as Ms. Mayawati's Muslim vote bank is concerned. The Jatavs are also puzzled.

There is a section in her community that feels that she is running with the hare and hunting with the hounds in this election. Though she has fielded 20 Muslims and four Yadavs to scuttle the chances of the SP, there are several seats where her candidates are also making the BJP sweat it out this summer.

From the outside, a look at the profile of BSP candidates suggests two things. One, as always, the party has picked those who can fund their election themselves. Second, the caste and religion profiles of the candidates suggest that, this time, the party has carefully picked candidates who can harm the prospects of both the SP and the BJP depending on who is the bigger competitor for a particular seat.

However, as the date for the last round of nominations came nearer, it appeared that the party was in a hurry to change candidates and bring in those that would hurt the prospects of the SP. It again gave wing to the 'BJP's B-team' charge against the party and the speculation that the direction of the wind is changing gained some momentum.

Sources in the BAMCEF (Backward and Minorities Communities Employees Federation) said that the answer lay in the tacit shift in the party's core vote bank towards the SP-Congress alliance in some seats that voted in the first three phases. "After the dismissal, the message in the community is clear. *Bakre ki maa, apne bachche ko katne se bacha rahi hai* (The mother of the goat is saving her kid from slaughter), but some also feel that there is an inherent message for the community," said a senior BAMCEF member in Etah.

In fact, it is the BAMCEF, founded by the late Kanshi Ram and once the ideological fountainhead of the BSP, that is being seen as the force behind the shift in the Jatav vote towards the Congress-SP alliance in the State in some seats. BAMCEF members are working in the rural belt to impress upon the community that the organisation could nullify the impact of the RSS, and that, over the last few years, the BSP has not given the social organisation its due in the political sphere.

"Politicians come and go but the interests of the community are paramount," a member said.

The BJP and BSP share a long love-hate relationship in the State. In 2022, in an interview in the middle of a bipolar Assembly election, Union Home Minister Amit Shah praised Ms. Mayawati's performance, leading to speculation. This time, however, Ms. Mayawati took two strange decisions after Mr. Shah's visit to Lucknow last week.

Apart from dismissing Mr. Anand, she changed ticket of Shrikala Reddy, wife of Rajput strongman Dhananjay Singh, days after he got bail. Jaunpur is the only seat where the BSP had a realistic chance of securing a victory.

As the polling moves towards the eastern parts of the State, the BSP's prospects seem to be going south.

Making a shift from boardroom to the heat and dust of electoral battlefield

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

It has been a marked shift for Santrupt Misra, who took voluntary retirement from his high-flying corporate job to embark on a political career.

The business attire of suit and boots has been replaced with kurta, pyjama, sleeveless jacket, and chappal. He is no longer surrounded by business executives, board members, and consultants. Instead, political activists and those aspiring to gain from his political journey have landed at his residence in Cuttack, far away from his cosy home in Mumbai.

Mr. Misra, 58, joined the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), the ruling party in Odisha, earlier this year "to serve the people of my home State". He is the BJD candidate for the Cuttack Lok Sabha constituency, which goes to the polls on May 25.

Mr. Misra, who grew up in Odisha, was the CEO, Birla Carbon; director, Chemicals; and director, Group Human Resources for the Aditya Birla Group.

A close confidant of chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla, Mr. Misra declared assets worth ₹461 crore in the nomination affidavit. His annual income in the financial year 2022-2023 stood at over ₹66 crore. On what made him join politics, Mr. Mishra told *The Hindu* that he could have continued earning for himself but he was confronted with several questions on the purpose of life and what would provide him utmost satisfaction.

"I wanted to make a larger contribution beyond being confined to a single organisation, to work with more diverse sections of people who are very different from what I saw in the corporate world," he said.

"I also felt that in my home State I could apply my decades of corporate learning in diversity to kind of make a big difference in the people's life," he said.

On why he chose the BJD, Mr. Misra said, "For three reasons. Naveen Patnaik, the leader of the party, is person of change. He remains non-partisan and focused on development. He also remains focused on the practice of a kind of civilised gentleman."

"And second was the fact that the BJD, which is a regional party, was focused on the State only and was not kind of getting into other things other than development of the people in the State only. Other national parties were focused on the other States. That was different."

"And finally, I found that Biju Janata Dal was very focused on development of people and the development of politics of people. So these were three reasons," he added.

Mr Misra wants to use his experience in problem-solving, resource utilisation, resource mobilisation, teamwork, conflict resolution, visioning and long-term planning for the development of the State. "Each one of them have an application somewhere at the end. And I have only experienced some of it that I am using it.

Mr. Misra faces Bhartruhari Mahtab of the BJP. A six-time MP, Mr. Mahtab was earlier with the BJD.

New role: Santrupt Misra is the Biju Janata Dal's candidate in the Cuttack Lok Sabha constituency. X/@DRSANTRUPTMISRA

PDP and NC allege crackdown on party workers, write to EC

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti and National Conference (NC) candidate Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Sunday wrote to the Election Commission (EC), alleging a police crackdown on party workers. They said the police had detained hundreds of party workers in the Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency, where polling will be held on Monday.

"The State administration, under the control of the Union government, is shamelessly engaged in activities aimed at intimidating voters and supporters of the PDP. I am deeply troubled by reports of security agencies conducting raids and harassing PDP workers in Pulwama and Shopian districts," Ms. Mufti said in the letter to the EC. She said the situation had escalated to a point where the security establishment was instilling fear. PDP candidate Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra said over 50 of his workers were detained.

The NC has made similar allegations. "We have written to the EC. Over 100 workers have been summoned and many were detained. The police are under the direct control of the Home Ministry. There is an attempt to bring down voter turnout to tilt election results in favour of proxies," NC candidate Aga Syed Ruhullah said.

J&K Apni Party general secretary Rafi Ahmad Mir also alleged harassment.

Reacting to the accusations, a police spokesperson said, "Statements and speculation of political parties suggesting that police have been harassing their party workers in different ways at the behest of the other is without basis. The J&K police are committed to enforcing the law and the MCC guidelines pertaining to security in furtherance of free and fair elections."

INBRIEF

U.P. will become 'mafia-free' after June 4: Yogi Adityanath

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday asserted that the State would become "mafia-free" after June 4. Speaking at an event in Lucknow, Mr. Adityanath declared a decisive measure set for June 4, when a fixed deadline would be established to declare Uttar Pradesh a "mafia-free" State. "The properties amassed by notorious mafia figures will face confiscation, with the seized assets slated for redistribution to underprivileged segments of society, including the impoverished, orphaned, women's shelters, and facilities catering to the needs of persons with disabilities," a statement by the official spokesperson of the Chief Minister's Office read.

PM holds roadshow in Patna along with CM Nitish Kumar

On the eve of the fourth phase of polling, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, along with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, held a roadshow in Patna for Patna Sahib BJP candidate Ravi Shankar Prasad. It was the first time that a Prime Minister had held a roadshow in Bihar. BJP workers, supporters and local residents gathered in large numbers to catch a glimpse of the Prime Minister. The roadshow is also expected to have an impact on the neighbouring Patliputra seat in Patna district where BJP candidate Ram Kripal Yadav is up against Misa Bharti, eldest daughter of Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Lalu Prasad.

Two booked for taking kin inside polling booths

Congress MLA from Bhopal Central Arif Masood and former State Minister and BJP leader Kamal Patel have been booked for allegedly taking their kin inside polling booths while casting votes on May 7, the police said on Sunday. The action came after complaints were lodged with the Election Commission. The two leaders or their kin had allegedly uploaded on social media videos showing them inside the polling booths, the police said. The police officials said the use of mobile phones in a prescribed area of the polling booth was forbidden. Besides, more than one person is not allowed to enter the area where the vote is cast, they added. PTI

All the demands of Ladakh people will be met, says Rijiju

The BJP-led government at the Centre has a road map to meet the "aspirations and expectations" of the people of Ladakh, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Sunday. He also sought the support of the electorate for BJP candidate Tashi Gyalson for continuation of dialogue to address issues such as the grant of the Sixth Schedule to the region. The Union Minister said Mr. Gylson's win was directly linked to the future of Ladakh. "I have come here with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantee that all your demands will be met in the next five years. We have prepared a road map and we are promise-bound to fulfil all your demands. This is my message to the people of Ladakh," Mr. Rijiju said. PTI

Modi, Mamata trade barbs over Sandeshkhali issue

PM says Trinamool Congress 'goons' are threatening the women of Sandeshkhali to protect the accused, CM accuses Modi of peddling lies, asks why no action has been taken against Governor

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday alleged that the "goons" of the Trinamool Congress were threatening the tormented women of Sandeshkhali to protect Shahjahan Sheikh, who, along with his aides, has been accused of sexual harassment and other charges

"The Trinamool Congress has started a new game at Sandeshkhali. The Trinamool Congress is doing everything to protect the culprits of Sandeshkhali," Mr. Modi said.

The remarks by the Prime Minister came against the backdrop of the Trinamool highlighting multiple videos showing a local BJP leader allegedly making several women of Sandeshkhali sign on blank papers, which were later filled up as complaints of sexual assault against Trinamool Congress leaders.

Sandeshkhali has become a major political issue for the BJP in West Bengal during the ongoing Lok Sabha election. The Trinamool Congress is trying to raise questions on the veracity of the allegations against party leaders by highlighting the videos.

Vote trail: Prime Minister Narendra Modi waves to supporters as he holds a roadshow at Barrackpore on Sunday. ANI

Mr. Modi, who addressed four public meetings in the State, alleged that under the Trinamool Congress rule, Hindus had turned into "second-class" citizens. "The Trinamool Congress has surrendered before vote-bank politics in Bengal, where you cannot take the name of Shri Ram and neither can one celebrate Ram Navami," he said.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and added, "As long as Modi is there, no one can repeal the CAA law".

'Fewer seats'

Mr. Modi added that the Congress would get fewer seats in the Lok Sabha election than the age of its '*shehzada*'. Though Mr. Modi did not name Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, the remarks were directed at him. Last week, Mr. Modi had said that the Congress tally would hit an all-time low and the party would not be able to cross the half-century mark.

Targeting the Trinamool Congress leadership over corruption, the Prime Minister referred to the job scam and hordes of cash being recovered from the Ministers of the State government. "Trinamool Congress has made corruption a full-time business," he said.

Mamata's charge

Responding to the remarks, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said Mr. Modi was peddling lies on Sandeshkhali and questioned why he was maintaining silence on the allegations of molestation against Governor C.V. Ananda Bose. A woman employee of the Raj Bhavan has lodged a police complaint against the Governor accusing him of sexual harassment.

"The Prime Minister is still peddling lies about Sandeshkhali. He should be ashamed as the BJP's conspiracy has now become public," Ms. Banerjee said in North 24 Parganas.

The Trinamool Congress chairperson said: "Why did the Prime Minister not ask the Governor to resign during his overnight stay at Raj Bhavan?"

PM must begin probe into 'Adani-Ambani cash claim': Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday reiterated its demand for an investigation into the alleged Tempos (a goods carrier model) of illicit money that Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a campaign speech at Telangana's Karimnagar on May 8, accused industrialists Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani of sending to the Congress.

Jairam Ramesh, Congress's general secretary (communications), further emphasised the party's resolve to ensure a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe into the relationship between the growth of Mr. Adani's business empire and the Narendra Modi-led government, adding that the "incoming INDIA government" would constitute one.

Mr. Ramesh posted on X that the Congress had been calling for an investigation into alleged *quid pro quo* between the Narendra Modi-led government and the Adani Group – what it calls "the Modani scandal" – consistently since January.

In the post, he said, "We also reiterate our demand that the PM investigate all Tempos carrying illicit funds that are being sent, as he has alleged, from business groups such as Adani and Ambani. This includes making use of the investigative agencies that he has been so quick to deploy against the Opposition."

Mr. Ramesh alleged that the "now outgoing Prime Minister has enabled it [Adani] to make supernormal profits from overpriced coal imports and inflated electricity prices, become the main beneficiary of the Modi Sarkar's privatisation mania, flout SEBI rules and regulations with impunity, and park ₹20,000 crore of benami funds in shell companies, all involving dubious transactions with Chinese nationals".

This comes after Mr. Modi accused the two industrialists of sending illicit funds to the Congress, claiming that it was the reason Rahul Gandhi had stopped speaking against them since the elections were announced.

However, a fact-check soon revealed that Mr. Gandhi had spoken out against Mr. Modi's alleged associations with the two industrialists just a day before the latter's speech in Telangana.

Shah targets Gandhi family in Congress bastion Rae Bareli; Priyanka hits back

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday attacked the Gandhi family for allegedly failing to do any development work in Rae Bareli despite representing it for decades. He accused former Congress president Sonia Gandhi of spending more than 70% of her MP funds on minorities.

"The people of Uttar Pradesh have rejected the SP (Samajwadi Party)-Congress who opened fire on the devotees of Lord Ram and encouraged hooliganism. Be it Amethi or Rae Bareli, the Gandhi family has not done any development anywhere. You have been voting for them (the Gandhi family) for many years. Have you received anything from the MP fund? If you have not received it, where did it go? It went to their vote bank," Mr. Shah said in Rae Bareli.

Amit Shah

Mr. Shah, who was addressing a rally in support of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Dinesh Pratap Singh, pitched the issue of Article 370, accusing the Congress leaders of praising Pakistan. "Congress feels that removal of Article 370 was wrong. You all tell me whether the removal of Article 370 was wrong. Their (Congress) leaders praised Pakistan, calling for talks with Pakistan. Are talks possible with someone who kills our soldiers?" he asked.

"Kashmir belongs to India. When Narendra Modi*ji* became Prime Minister for the second time, he removed Article 370 and made Kashmir an integral part of India. Terrorism ended in Kashmir. The nation is now fully secure and prosperous," Mr. Shah said.

Hitting back, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who is campaigning for her brother Rahul Gandhi, highlighted the development projects initiated by the grand old party. "What has BJP done for Rae Bareli? It is the Congress which established the Rail Coach Factory, National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) and took up the development of five national highways. We started top hospitals," she said.

Dalits, tribals will be treated like slaves if Modi, Shah get third term, says Kharge

Abhinay Deshpande
MUMBAI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday urged people to vote for his party, asserting that a third term for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah would result in the poor, Dalits, and tribal people being "treated like slaves".

"Before Independence, the poor, Dalits and tribals were treated like slaves. If you give a third term to Modi and Shah, the same situation will repeat. We will become slaves again," he said at an election rally in Maharashtra's Dhule, where the party has fielded former MLA Shobha Bachhav against the BJP's former Union Minister Subhash Bhamre.

The Lok Sabha seat in north Maharashtra will go to the polls on May 20.

Mallikarjun Kharge

Stating that this election would shape the nation's future, the Dalit leader said: "You have to vote for your own sake and your own people. We need to save the Constitution. This election will shape the future of the country."

'Spreading lies'

Mr. Kharge criticised Mr. Modi for failing to fulfil promises such as bringing back black money and creating two crore jobs annually and accused him of "spreading lies".

He also accused Mr. Modi of implementing policies that increased production costs for farmers instead of boosting their incomes. "He [Mr. Modi] claimed to provide two crore jobs yearly but never did. Instead of increasing farmers' income, as per his claims, his wrong policies increased the production cost for growers. That is why Modi should be removed from power," he said.

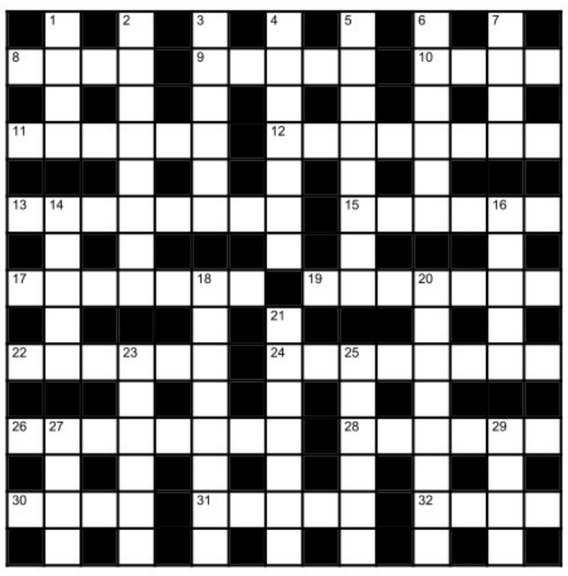
Citing remarks of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat, Mr. Kharge said, "If there is no Constitution, there will be 'no one to save you'. RSS chief Bhagwat had said in 2015 that the Constitution should be changed. Later, many BJP MPs and saffron party leaders also made similar statements."

TH CROSSWORD + 14173

(set by Incognito)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8 Spectacles displayed in doctor's portal (4)
9 Go and repair (5)
10 Put an end to breaking pots (4)
11 Eg., Tulu is transliterated into another language (6)
12 For example, make up company's time lost before start of competition (8)
13 Son in confusion? Take to court for inconsequential matter (3-5)
15 Bad actor permitted to join play (6)
17 Falls again, rejected by god (7)
19 Shorten a ship's control centre (7)
22 European car carried by ship for some Arabians (6)
24 A midshipman with small capacity to eat (8)
26 After whiskey, chat about Director General's love for canine kept for security purposes (8)
28 Providing weapons from a Chinese dynasty after end of war (6)
30 Workers start to demolish and repair (4)
31 Din from piano is excruciating (5)
32 Grave boy follows Thomas (4)

Down

1 Slovenia has nothing for tennis players (4)
2 Using oar can be stimulating (8)
3 Books containing photographs from American criminal and vagrants (6)
4 Tinder might need these to add fire to your relationships (7)
5 Colonial lady's address in India obtained from card discarded by excited chambermaid when receiving first salary (8)
6 High respect from Spanish side, I hear (6)
7 Leave before beginning of battle with Italy and desert (4)
14 Pen pal leaves piano player composing for Indian language (5)
16 Number inscribed in weights (5)
18 Denizen's tenancy payment covers margin (8)
20 Inform, "It is personal" (8)
21 Haggle and prohibit profit (7)
23 Decipher: Fish in a river (6)
25 For example, Jupiter's plot to go ahead of alien (6)
27 American guys' prayer ending (4)
29 Desensitized part of sternum bone (4)

SUDOKU

					5	4	6	1
	6		8				9	
9						5		
		7		3	8		4	
6				2				3
	8		4	7		1		
		1						4
	4				7		3	
8	9	2	6					

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

	R		P		P		O		S		A		M
B	E	A	R		L	A	W	N	T	E	N	N	I	S
	P		E		A		N		U		S		C
P	R	I	S	O	N		S	C	R	A	W	L	E	D
	E		S		E				G		E		
A	S	S	I	S	T	E	D		E	R	R	A	T	A
	E		N				O		O				R
S	N	U	G		S	I	R	E	N		B	R	I	G
	T					I					A		P
A	S	C	E	N	T		S	C	H	E	D	U	L	E
			X		T				O		D		I
V	E	N	E	T	I	A	N		W	R	E	N	C	H
	N		D		G		O		L		B		A
O	V	E	R	C	H	A	R	G	E		T	A	T	A
	Y		A		T		M		R		S		E

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

1	3	8	4	5	7	6	9	2
6	2	7	1	9	3	8	5	4
5	9	4	8	2	6	3	7	1
8	1	6	2	7	5	4	3	9
3	4	5	6	1	9	7	2	8
9	7	2	3	8	4	1	6	5
4	6	1	5	3	2	9	8	7
2	8	9	7	6	1	5	4	3
7	5	3	9	4	8	2	1	6

FAITH

Divine sanction of Lord

Scriptures say that people cannot achieve anything in their lives without the blessings of God and should try to yearn for the same. Sri Damodhara Dikshidhar said in a discourse that the great Acharya Sri Adi Sankara says in 'Viveka Choodamani' that a man gets three things only with the blessings of God (*trayamevaitat daivanugraha hetukam*). The three things are: to be born as a human being, get liberated from difficulties and problems (*Mumukshuthvam*), and get a good Acharya (*Mahapurusha Samsraya:*)

To derive His blessings, people perform poojas and homas, yogis through meditation, and jnanis see the Lord everywhere without discrimination. Sri Krishna says, "*Aham Vaiswanaro Bhuthva*"– Chapter 15 Sloka 14 – I function within the bodies of all living beings. Arjuna was all-powerful and invincible as long as Sri Krishna was with him. When Lord Krishna departed from the world of men and took the ascent of His realm, Arjuna was like a fish out of water. He became enervated without Krishna. On his return from Dwaraka, an ordinary cowherd seized Arjuna's bow, which he could not resist or retrieve, as he lost all his power and energy without Sri Krishna.

Arjuna told his brother Yudhishthira that Krishna had not shown His Lordship but behaved as an ordinary friend and relative.

Dos & don'ts in travel insurance

COVERNOTE

You can buy travel health insurance from insurers in India or at your destination country. Yes, rates are higher, but healthcare costs are higher these days as well

K. Nitya Kalyani

It's that time of the year when everybody wants to escape. Be it the heat, daily duties or the drudgeries of life, travel is on the mind.

Travel insurance should also pop up and here are a few thoughts as you pack your bags and call your insurance agent. As it happens, I had a handful of friends calling me up to ask about policies to choose. Many shared good experiences on past claims while abroad, others did not, and are pursuing some articulate response from their insurer. Strangely enough, this fails to happen more often than not. When there is a question, human beings seem to suddenly vanish and you are either talking to a website bot or searching in vain in the app for a button that just does not seem to be there. Voice mail-type complaint numbers, some friends told me, take them in circles and disconnect.

Woes apart, we will come to them later on, here are a few basic, random pieces of advice to buy your medical insurance for travel abroad.

You can buy travel health insurance from insurers in India or at your destination country, things have indeed come a long way in terms of options and flexibility. Yes, rates are higher these days, but so are healthcare costs.

If you have a hospitalisation policy here and you plan a longish stay abroad, you can cash in on a specific benefit. Buy a travel policy from the same insurance company, and you can put your domestic policy on hold for the duration of your stay abroad. For this, your time out of India should be of the minimum duration as per your insurance company rules.

That is, if you are abroad for two months, your domestic policy would be extended by two months. This is because only one of the two will be applicable at any given time and the insured and insurer are the same. Ask in writing and get their concurrence in writing. They will pass an endorsement postponing your renewal date and share it with you.

Here's a bit of caution, especially for senior citizens. Don't leave it until the last day to buy your travel insurance. You may be asked for medical tests and you have to factor in the time for it.

Pre-existing conditions

Your pre-existing conditions will have to be declared and will be excluded, as usual. You will be covered for any emergency or accident hospitalisation unrelated to or not aggravated by your pre-existing condition. You can get a policy that covers pre-existing conditions for an extra premium. Bajaj Alliance and ICICI Lombard have policies as do a few other companies. Either way, not declaring, which is tacitly encouraged, will put you in a difficult spot in these days of better documentation. In fact, many countries require medical tests and health policy as part of visa conditions.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in The experts on personal finance will answer select queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular.

ILLUSTRATION: SOUMYADIP SINHA

Rick Guerin: the lesser known value investor

The rationale behind value investing is that markets may misprice assets and individuals can purchase these assets for cents on the dollar, which would later realise their actual value

ADVANTAGE INVESTOR

Anand Srinivasan
Sashwath Swaminathan

> Buffett, Munger, and Guerin's experience with Blue Chip Stamps highlights the efficacy of value investing

Purchasing an asset at a price trading well below its intrinsic or actual value may be termed value investing.

The rationale behind value investing is that markets may misprice assets, and individuals can purchase these mispriced assets for cents on the dollar, which would later realise their actual value, leading to considerable gains for the investor.

Warren Buffet and his late business partner and close friend Charlie Munger are the most recognisable value investors from today's school of value investing.

This duo was seen to be an unrivalled force in the field of investing, and they had successfully compounded their wealth at a rate much higher than that of the general market, leading to outsized net worth in the billions. However, this investing duo was a group of three consisting of an equally skilled and talented but lesser-known investor known as Rick Guerin.

Their paths were inextricably linked due to their intuitive grasp of and adherence to the principle of purchasing assets for cents on the dollar.

Rick Guerin worked with Buffet and Munger during the 1970s, even owning a part of Buffet and Munger's iconic investment vehicle, Berkshire Hathaway. Buffet, Munger and Guerin had in 1970 devised an investment plan to purchase shares of and gain controlling interest in a company known as "Blue Chip Stamps".

Loyalty programme

Blue Chip Stamps had a loyalty programme, where customers earned stamps based on purchases at participating stores, such as grocery stores, gas stations, and pharmacies.

These stamps were collected in books and could be exchanged at redemption centres for various merchandise items, such as furniture and tableware.

These stamps acted as a type of float that provided a means to access leverage without paying any interest on access to liquidity.

The trio had identified that compared with a market capitalisation of $63.5 million; they had unredeemed stamps worth about $43 million, which would likely remain unredeemed.

Moreover, the company had marketable securities worth $72 million, which were liquid, further adding to the lucrativeness of the deal. The actual impetus to take up this deal came from the trio only needing to invest enough to acquire a controlling interest in the company, which would roughly amount to a little over half of the company's equity. This meant they would only have to put up $38 million to unlock over $117 million for investment activities. Berkshire Hathaway, at the end of 1972, owned 19% of the company, which steadily rose to 60% by 1979, after which the company was merged with Berkshire Hathaway for a stock swap in 1983, which gave Charlie Munger his lion's share of ownership in Berkshire Hathaway. The float made available by this deal allowed the trio to acquire a controlling interest in See's Candy (another classic Berkshire Hathaway investment) in 1972 and later acquire it entirely for $25 million.

Wesco Financial Corporation was another company that the control over Blue Chip Stamps' float permitted them to purchase during that period.

However, Rick Guerin went on to utilise leverage, which Buffet and Munger generally avoided throughout their investment careers. During the stock market downturn in 1973-74, Rick Guerin, who was subjected to margin calls on his loans, ended up losing a large sum of money along with the years of progress he had made with Buffet and Munger in accumulating capital.

Moreover, he was forced to sell his stake in Berkshire Hathaway for $40 per share (which was trading at over $6,17,000 at the time of writing this piece). Buffet had famously quipped that he and Munger knew they would become incredibly wealthy and were in no rush.

Nonetheless, Guerin recovered the losses he had incurred over the next decade, but had not reached the heights of success achieved by both Munger and Buffet in the decades that followed their iconic partnership.

Strategic utilisation

Warren Buffett, Charlie Munger, and Rick Guerin's experience with Blue Chip Stamps highlights the efficacy of value investing when combined with strategic asset utilisation, particularly the use of float from unredeemed stamps to secure controlling stakes in undervalued companies like See's Candy and Wesco Financial Corporation. Their approach, characterised by patience and adherence to core investing principles, yielded substantial returns.

In contrast, Guerin's use of leverage and resultant losses during market downturns illustrate the risks associated with haste and excessive borrowing.

This example underlines that disciplined, patient investing, free of excessive leverage, is crucial for long-term investment success.

(Anand Srinivasan is a consultant; Sashwath Swaminathan is a research assistant at Aionion Investment Services)

Equity investments: A bet on the asset class

THINKINVESTOR

You are betting that equity investments will generate greater returns than the returns on your bond investments (bank deposits)

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

If you want to be conservative and invest only in bank deposits, then your ought to save more, as deposits earn lower post-tax returns. You must, therefore, invest in equity. True, equity has a downside. But that is the trade-off you must make to have a good current lifestyle and save for the future. Your equity investments must preferably be in exchange-traded funds (ETFs) or mutual funds. The question is: What benchmark should you choose? In this article, we discuss why funds benchmarked to a sector index or a strategy index may not be appropriate for your goal-based portfolios, and why your optimal choice must be a broad-based index or a large-cap index.

In the context of goal-based portfolios, your equity investment is a bet on equity as an asset class. That is, you are betting that equity investments will generate greater returns than the returns on your bond investments (read bank deposits). Your objective is not to bet on an individual sector performing well. Why? Each of your life goal will span multiple years. And it is highly unlikely that a sector that performs well today will do well next year or two years hence. Can you confidently shift your investments continually between sectors through your investing life? It is difficult to time the market. Therefore, choosing sector funds may not be optimal for goal-based investments.

What about funds based on strategy indices? These funds form part of alternative investments. The indices are created applying similar rules that portfolio managers use to generate alpha (greater returns than the benchmark index) in the traditional asset management space. In the U.S., the asset management industry typically offers ETFs on strategy indices. As the ETFs are typically passive products, ETFs on strategy indices are called smart beta products to differentiate them from ETFs on traditional market-capitalisation-based indices. Such products are yet to catch on in India. The point is that such products may not fit with the core principle of equity investment for goal-based portfolios- bet on equity as an asset class. Given our objective to bet on equity as an asset class, the preferred investment must be an ETF or an index fund on a broad-market index such as the NSE 500. Note that this logic applies to whichever markets you invest. The next preferred choice, if funds on a broad-based index are unavailable, is to invest in a fund benchmarked to a large-cap index.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%) Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Small Finance Banks				
AU Small Finance Bank	8.00	6.50	7.50	7.25
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.20	8.00	7.25
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.25	6.00	6.75	6.25
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.50	7.25	7.25
NorthEast Small Finance Bank	8.50	7.75	8.00	6.25
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.65	6.85	8.60	8.25
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.25	7.20	7.20
Unity Small Finance Bank	9.00	7.85	8.15	8.15
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.00	8.50	7.75
Private Sector Banks				
Axis Bank	7.20	6.70	7.10	7.00
Bandhan Bank	7.85	7.85	7.25	5.85
City Union Bank	7.25	7.00	6.50	6.25
CSB Bank	7.75	5.00	5.75	5.75
DBS Bank	7.50	7.00	6.50	6.50
DCB Bank	8.00	7.15	7.60	7.40
Federal Bank	7.40	6.80	7.00	6.60
HDFC Bank	7.25	6.60	7.00	7.00
ICICI Bank	7.20	6.70	7.00	7.00
IDFC First Bank	8.00	6.50	7.25	7.00
IndusInd Bank	7.75	7.75	7.25	7.25
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	7.05	7.05	6.50	6.50
Karur Vysya Bank	7.50	7.00	7.00	7.00
Karnataka Bank	7.40	7.10	6.50	6.50
Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.40	7.10	7.00	6.20
RBL Bank	8.00	7.50	7.50	7.10
SBM Bank India	8.25	7.10	7.60	7.75
South Indian Bank	7.40	6.70	6.70	6.00
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.50	7.00	6.50	6.50
YES Bank	7.75	7.25	7.25	7.25
Public Sector Banks				
Bank of Baroda	7.25	6.85	7.25	6.50
Bank of India	7.25	6.80	6.50	6.00
Bank of Maharashtra	7.10	6.75	6.50	6.50
Canara Bank	7.25	6.85	6.80	6.70
Central Bank of India	7.25	6.75	6.50	6.25
Indian Bank	7.25	6.10	6.25	6.25
Indian Overseas Bank	7.30	6.90	6.50	6.50
Punjab National Bank	7.25	6.75	7.00	6.50
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.25	6.20	6.00	6.00
State Bank of India	7.10	6.80	6.75	6.50
Union Bank of India	7.25	6.75	6.50	6.50

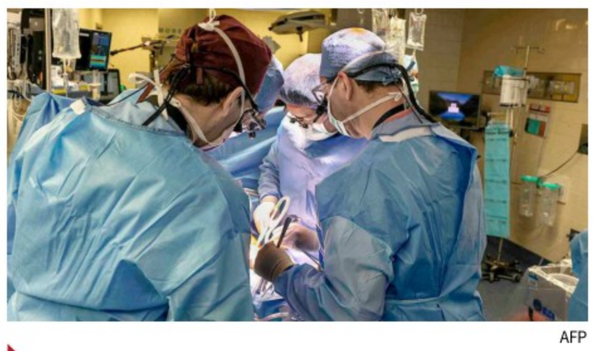
Home Loan Interest Rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
	(In %)		
Public Sector Banks			
State Bank of India	8.50-9.85	8.50-9.85	8.50-9.85
Bank of Baroda	9.15-10.65	9.15-10.65	9.15-10.90
Union Bank of India	8.35-10.75	8.35-10.90	8.35-10.90
Punjab National Bank	8.45-10.25	8.40-10.15	8.40-10.15
Bank of India	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85
Canara Bank	8.50-11.25	8.45-11.25	8.40-11.15
UCO Bank	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30
Bank of Maharashtra	8.35-11.15	8.35-11.15	8.35-11.15
Punjab and Sind Bank	8.50-10.00	8.50-10.00	8.50-10.00
Indian Overseas Bank	8.40-10.60	8.40-10.60	8.40-10.60
Central Bank of India	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80
Private Sector Banks			
Kotak Mahindra Bank	8.70*	8.70*	8.70*
ICICI Bank	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
Axis Bank	8.75-13.30	8.75-13.30	8.75-9.65
HSBC Bank	8.45*	8.45*	8.45*
South Indian Bank	8.70-11.70	8.70-11.70	8.70-11.70
Karur Vysya Bank	9.00-11.05	9.00-11.05	9.00-11.05
Karnataka Bank	8.50-10.62	8.50-10.62	8.50-10.62
Federal Bank	8.80*	8.80*	8.80*
Dhanlaxmi Bank	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95
Bandhan Bank	9.16-15.00	9.16-13.33	9.16-13.33
RBL Bank	8.90*	8.90*	8.90*
CSB Bank	10.73-12.58	10.73-12.58	10.73-12.58
HDFC Bank Ltd.	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
City Union Bank	8.25-9.50	8.50-10.00	8.75-10.50
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
LIC Housing Finance	8.50-10.35	8.50-10.55	8.50-10.75
Bajaj Housing Finance	8.50*	8.50*	8.50*
Tata Capital	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
PNB Housing Finance	8.50-14.50	8.50-14.50	8.50-11.45
GIC Housing Finance	8.80*	8.80*	8.80*
SMFG India Home Finance	10.00*	10.00*	10.00*
Indiabulls Housing	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
Aditya Birla Capital	8.60*	8.60*	8.60*
ICICI Home Finance	9.20*	9.20*	9.20*

*Onwards Rates as on May 8 Source:Paisabazaar.com

BOSTON

First human who received transplanted pig kidney dies



AFP

A man with end-stage renal disease who earlier this year became the first human to receive a new kidney from a genetically modified pig has died, Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston said. Rick Slayman, 62, had received the transplant in March in a four-hour surgery that the hospital called "a milestone". REUTERS

WASHINGTON

Legendary U.S. B-movie director and producer Roger Corman dies

AFP

American B-movie director and producer Roger Corman, known for hundreds of low-budget films and giving some of the biggest stars their early breaks, died at the age of 98. He had helped jumpstart the careers of Martin Scorsese, Robert De Niro and Francis Ford Coppola, as well as cast Jack Nicholson in his debut role. AFP

TANAH DATAR

At least 34 killed and 16 missing following floods in Indonesia

AFP

At least 34 were killed and 16 missing in Indonesia after flash floods and cold lava flow from Mount Marapi, one of the archipelago's most active volcanos, damaged homes, roads and mosques, officials said on Sunday. Hours of heavy rain had caused flooding in two districts in Sumatra province on Saturday evening. AFP

KATHMANDU

Nepal's Kami Rita Sherpa climbs Everest for record 29th time

AFP

Nepal's legendary mountaineer Kami Rita Sherpa made history on Sunday by breaking his record for the highest number of ascents of the Everest as he scaled the world's highest peak for the 29th time. The 54-year-old veteran climber reached the 8,849-metre peak at 7:25 am local time on Sunday. PTI

Fighting rages across parts of Gaza Strip as death toll crosses 35,000

Israeli air strikes pound northern, central and southern parts of the enclave during the night and into Sunday morning; UN chief calls for an immediate ceasefire; Biden says truce can be achieved 'tomorrow' if Hamas agrees to release hostages

Agence France-Presse
RAFAH

Israel struck Gaza on Sunday and troops were battling militants in several areas of the Hamas-run territory, where the Health Ministry said the death toll in the war had exceeded 35,000 people.

More than seven months into the Israel-Hamas war, UN chief Antonio Guterres urged "an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, the unconditional release of all hostages and an immediate surge in humanitarian aid" into the besieged Gaza Strip.

"But a ceasefire will only be the start," Mr. Guterres told a donor conference in Kuwait. "It will be a long road back from the devastation and trauma of this war."

No let-up: Smoke billows after an explosion in northern Gaza, amid the conflict between Israel and Hamas, on Sunday. REUTERS

As Egyptian, Qatari and U.S. mediation efforts towards a truce appeared to stall, U.S. President Joe Biden said on Saturday a ceasefire could be achieved "tomorrow" if Hamas released the hostages held in Gaza since the October 7 attack that sparked the conflict.

Israeli air strikes pounded parts of northern, central and southern Gaza during the night and into Sunday morning.

Latest figures

The Health Ministry in the territory said that at least 63 people had been killed over the last 24 hours, bringing the overall death toll from Israel's bombardment and offensive in Gaza to at least 35,034 people, mostly women and children.

Months after Israel said it had dismantled Hamas's command structure in northern Gaza, fighting has resumed in recent days in Jabalia refugee camp and Gaza City's Zeitun neighbourhood.

'Hamas rebuilding'

Military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said late on Saturday that "in recent weeks we have identified attempts by Hamas to rebuild its military capabilities in Jabalia, and we are acting to destroy these attempts".

He also said there was an operation in Zeitun.

On Saturday, the Israeli military expanded an evacuation order for eastern Rafah and said 300,000 Palestinians had left the area.

Israel lacks 'credible plan' to protect Rafah civilians, says Blinken

Reuters
WASHINGTON

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Sunday defended a decision to pause a delivery to Israel of 3,500 bombs over concerns they could be used in the Gazan city of Rafah, saying Israel lacked a "credible plan" to protect some 1.4 million civilians sheltering there.

Speaking to ABC News's *This Week*, Mr. Blinken said that U.S. President Joe Biden remains determined to help Israel defend itself and that the shipment of 3,500 2,000-pound and 500-pound bombs was the only U.S. weapons package being withheld.

That could change, he said, if Israel launches a full-scale attack on Rafah.

Antony Blinken

Mr. Biden has made clear to Israel that if it "launches this major military operation to Rafah, then there are certain systems that we are not going to be supporting and supplying," Mr. Blinken said.

"We have real concerns about the way they are used," he said. Israel needs to "have a clear, credible plan to protect civilians, which we have not seen."

Students among 11 dead in Indonesia bus crash

Associated Press
BANDUNG

A bus slammed into cars and motorbikes after its brakes apparently malfunctioned in Indonesia's West Java province, killing at least 11 persons, mostly students, and injuring dozens of others, officials said on Sunday.

The bus carrying 61 students and teachers was returning to a high school in Depok outside Jakarta, the capital, late on Saturday from the hilly resort area of Bandung after a graduation celebration, said West Java police spokesperson Jules Abraham Abast.

It sped out of control on a downhill road and crossed lanes, hitting several cars and motorbikes before it crashed into an electricity pole, he said.

Nine persons died at the scene and two others died later in the hospital, including a teacher and a local motorist, the Mr. Abast said. Fifty-three other people were hospitalised with injuries, including some in critical condition, he said.

"We are still investigating the cause of the accident, but a preliminary investigation showed the bus's brakes malfunctioned," Abast said.

Road accidents are common in Indonesia due to poor safety standards and infrastructure.

Thousands flee Russia's renewed Ukraine offensive

Gaping hole: Firefighters secure an apartment building damaged by a Ukrainian strike in Russia's Belgorod region on Sunday. AFP

Associated Press
VILCHA

Thousands more civilians have fled Russia's renewed ground offensive in Ukraine's northeast that has targeted towns and villages with a barrage of artillery and mortar fire, officials said on Sunday.

The intense battles have forced at least one Ukrainian unit to withdraw in the Kharkiv region, capitulating more land to Russian forces across less defended settlements in the so-called contested "gray zone" along the Russian border.

By Sunday afternoon, the town of Vovchansk, with a prewar population of 17,000, emerged as a focal point in the battle. Officials said Russian forces were in the outskirts of the town and approaching from three directions.

At least 4,000 civilians have fled the Kharkiv region since Friday when Moscow's forces launched the operation. Heavy fighting raged Sunday along the northeast front line, where Russian forces attacked 27 settlements in the past 24 hours, he said.

Analysts say the Russian push is designed to exploit ammunition shortages before promised Western supplies can reach the front line.

Meanwhile, a 10-story apartment block collapsed in the Russian city of Belgorod, near the border, injuring at least 19 people. Russian authorities said the building collapsed following Ukrainian shelling.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that halting Russia's offensive in the northeast was a priority, and that Kyiv's troops were continuing counteroffensive operations in seven villages around the Kharkiv region.

Russian gains

The Russian Defence Ministry said on Sunday that its forces had captured four villages on the border along Ukraine's Kharkiv region, in addition to five villages reported to have been seized on Saturday. These areas were likely poorly fortified due to the dynamic fighting and constant heavy shelling, easing a Russian advance.

A Ukrainian unit said that they had been forced to retreat in some areas and that Russian forces had captured at least one more village late on Saturday.

'U.K. media warns Apple over plans to block ads'

Reuters

British newspaper groups have warned Apple that any move to impose a so-called "web eraser" tool to block advertisements would put the financial sustainability of journalism at risk, the *Financial Times* reported on Sunday.

Apple is preparing to include an AI-based privacy feature in the Safari browser in the next iOS 18 software update that will remove ads or other unwanted website content.

News Media Association raised concerns about how the planned tool would affect digital revenues in the industry, the FT said.

Protests at Waterloo

Activists take out a Pro-Palestinian demonstration on the Waterloo Bridge in London on Saturday, calling for an arms embargo on Israel. British Foreign Secretary David Cameron has said halting arms exports to Israel is 'not a wise path' and would only strengthen Hamas. AFP

S. Korea to set up $7-bn aid package for chip industry

Agence France-Presse
SEOUL

South Korea will set up an aid package worth more than $7 billion to support its chip industry, the Finance Ministry said on Sunday, as part of its drive to boost its critical semiconductor sector.

This initiative follows its pledge last year to build the world's largest chip centre using $240 billion of private investment, primarily from Samsung Electronics.

The package could be created through "a new fund financed by private and public financial institutions", Finance Minister Choi Sang-mok said.

कोल इंडिया लिमिटेड
(एक महारत्न कंपनी)

"All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of Coal India Ltd www.coalindia.in / respective Subsidiary Company, CIL e-procurement portal https://coalindiatenders.nic.in and Central Procurement Portal htttps://eprocure.gov.in. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal https://gem.gov.in".

NMDC Ltd.
(A Govt. Of India Enterprise) (ISO 9001 Company)
Bailadila Iron Ore Mines, Bacheli Complex
Bacheli, Distt. – South Bastar (Dantewada), CG – 494553
Phone No.: 07857-230210, Mob.: 8085559082

//e-Tender Notice //

BIOM/BC/Contracts/Publication/2024-25/084/ Date : 13.05.2024

Bailadila Iron Ore Mines, Bacheli Complex, NMDC Ltd. invites e-bids for the following works. Intending tenderers may visit and download Tender Documents from CPP Portal or www.nmdc.co.in or http://www.mstcecommerce.com/eprochome/nmdc/. Any corrigendum/addedum to be issued, the bidder must visit the online protal from time to time to notice the same. Corrigendum/addedum will not be published in any newspaper.The offer has to be submitted online at the given MSTC portal only till 03:30 PM and will be opened on 04:00 PM on respective last dates.

	MSTC Ref. No. NMDC/ Bacheli/ 24-25/ET/	NMDC Tender. No. BIOM/BC/ CONTRACTS /OTE(84)/24-25/	Short Description of Work	EMD (Rs.)	Last Date of Sub'n
1	25/94	E-032	Rewiring of 92 nos Type II vacant quarters for Bachelor accomodation at Subhash Nagar	98,802/-	13-06-2024
2	26/95	E-027	Undergrounding and laying of cable for SS-III Downhill feeder, Baila-5 feeder other feedeers emanated from Main Substation under Electrical Services, Bacheli	47,255/-	13-06-2024
3	27/96	HOSP-001	AMC OF HOSPITAL EQUIPMENTS	20,300/-	13-06-2024
4	30/99	C-292A	Comprehensive annual maintenance contract (CAMC) of cooler cum purifier and Hi-flow aqua guard for the year 2023-25 at BIOM, Bacheli Complex	25,000/-	13-06-2024
5	31/100	PE-013	Replacement of HT/LT Motors at different locations in SP -5	13,116/-	14-06-2024
6	28/97	C-368	Construction of hard top cement concrete road from loading plant welcome gate to end of railway bridge including approach road works Bacheli Complex.	30,100/-	14-06-2024
7	29/98	C-308	Miscellaneous Civil works & Face Lifting works (Interior & Exterior) of ET Hostel BIOM Bacheli Complex	50,300/-	14-06-2024

HOD (M&S and Contracts)
BIOM, Bacheli Complex

BHARATIYA RESERVE BANK NOTE MUDRAN (P) LIMITED
(WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF RESERVE BANK OF INDIA)
No. 3 & 4, 1st Stage, 1st Phase, BTM Layout, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru-560029 | Phone No. (080) 66602000, Fax: (080) 66602039

(NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING TENDER NO.002 / CO / F&A / 2024-25 dated 13/05/2024)
MSTC Event No. : BRBNMPL/Corporate Office/F&A/1/24-25/ET/12 [CLEARING FORWARDING AGENCY]

NCB FOR APPOINTMENT OF C&F AGENCY FOR BRBNMPL

BRBNMPL invites e-tender through MSTC Portal, under two-bid system (Two Part) from eligible and resourceful agencies/firms for engaging as C&F agency for Custom Clearance, Forwarding & Transportation etc. of Imported Materials of BRBNMPL from Seaports at Chennai & Kolkata and from Airports at Kolkata & Bengaluru and transporting them to destinations (BRBNMPL Mysuru Press & BRBNMPL Salboni Press). [Estimated Value of Tender - ₹ 175.00 lakhs].
Last date and time of tender submission on or before **13.06.2024 by 14.30 hours.** For downloading tender documents and other details, kindly visit: **www.mstcecommerce.com/eprocn**. Tender details are also available at our website: **www.brbnmpl.co.in.** Further, to note that any amendments / corrigendum to this tender, if issued in future, will be notified on the above websites only and will not be published in the newspapers.

CFO cum Company Secretary

TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD
Nanthancode, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 003
Phone: 0471-2314288, 94959 99919
E-Mail: dcotdb@gmail.com , eosabarimala@gmail.com
Website: www.travancoredevaswomboard.org

E-TENDERS FOR THE SUPPLY OF:

Cardamom, Dry Rice, Raw Rice, Jaggery Powder, Sugar Candy, Black Raisins, Dry Ginger, Cuminseed, Green Gram Dal, Beaten Rice, Butter Paper Bag, Pure Ghee, Ghee Pouch, Carton Box, BOP Tape, Easy Open Lids in connection with the festival period 1200 ME (2024-2025) of Sree Dharmasastha Temple, Sabarimala & Composite Cans at Sabarimala & Nilakkal.

E-Tender Closing Date : **05-06-2024 - 11.00 AM**
E-Tender Opening Date : **06-06-2024 - 11.00 AM**

Venue : **Devaswom Commissioner Office, Nanthancode, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 003.**

Detailed e-tender notifications and special instructions to the bidders are available on **www.travancoredevaswomboard.org**
For the submission of tender visit the website : **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**

ROC NO : 4/24/Sab.
Dated : 10-05-2024

Sd/- **DEVASWOM COMMISSIONER**
(For and behalf of Travancore Devaswom Board)

RARE

Jadeja is third batter to be out obstructing the field in the IPL

B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

In the 16th over of CSK's chase, Ravindra Jadeja became only the third batter after Yusuf Pathan (2013) and Amit Mishra (2019) to be adjudged obstructing the field in the IPL. While attempting a second run off Avesh Khan, Jadeja was sent back by Ruturaj Gaikwad and came in the way of Sanju Samson's throw.

RULE BOOK

That is how the law works, says Sangakkara on Jadeja's dismissal

AFP

When asked about Ravindra Jadeja's dismissal, Royals' Director of Cricket Kumar Sangakkara said that it is how the law works. "The law says that if a batter changes his direction and gets in the way of the throw, it is considered an obstruction. The rule was changed for the same reason a few years back," he articulated.

KEY ELEMENT

Du Plessis says variety in bowling has been a factor in RCB's success

K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

RCB skipper Faf du Plessis was elated at his team's recent fantastic run. "It's brilliant. We have put in some good performances and am really pleased. Lot of work has gone behind the scenes. We are getting it right and I feel there is a lot more variety in our bowling now. Yash and Lockie have been exceptional the last few games."

LEGEND

Narine is third player to take 550 or more wickets in men's T20s

K.R. DEEPAK

Sunil Narine became the third cricketer to pick up 550 or more wickets in men's T20s. He achieved the landmark during KKR's clash against MI in the IPL. Dwayne Bravo holds the top spot with 625 wickets while Afghan cricketer Rashid Khan with 574 wickets stands in second place.

Simarjeet, Ruturaj keep CSK in the hunt for playoffs berth

The pacer rattles the Royals batters with a spell of three for 26 while the spinners squeeze the runs dry in the middle overs; in pursuit of a small target, the skipper guides the side home; Samson's men slip to their third straight defeat on the road

IPL-17

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

On a typical slow Chepauk pitch, pacer Simarjeet Singh's fine spell (three for 26) and skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad's measured unbeaten 42 helped Chennai Super Kings beat Rajasthan Royals by five wickets at the MAC stadium here on Sunday.

Electing to bat, the Royals batters grappled with the challenging conditions on a surface where the ball gripped and did not come onto the bat easily to manage only 141 for five.

After a cautious start, Yashasvi Jaiswal stepped up a gear in the fourth, slog-sweeping Maheesh Theekshana for a six and then late-cut him for a boundary. In the next over, Jaiswal went after Shardul Thakur hitting consecutive boundaries as the Royals finished on 42 for no loss in the PowerPlay.

However, during the middle overs, things went pear-shaped for the visitors when Simarjeet struck twice in his first two, to remove the openers Jaiswal and Jos Buttler. The pacer was accurate, targeting the good length area and tucked up the batters without giving width.

Jaiswal was the first to go, trying to swat Simarjeet, but ended up slicing a skier to Ruturaj before Buttler scooped straight to fine-leg fielder Tushar Deshpande.

Ravindra Jadeja further squeezed the runs with his attacking line at the stumps, tying down the inform Sanju Samson.

At the other end, Riyan Parag (47 n.o.) did his best, striking a few sixes to keep the scoreboard moving, while Dhruv Jurel (28) gave the innings some impetus towards the end.

Swing factors: Simarjeet led the way with the ball before Ruturaj sealed the deal. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

SCOREBOARD

RAJASTHAN ROYALS

Yashasvi Jaiswal c Ruturaj b Simarjeet 24 *(21b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Jos Buttler c Deshpande b Simarjeet 21 *(25b, 2x4)*, Sanju Samson c Ruturaj b Simarjeet 15 *(19b)*, Riyan Parag (not out) 47 *(35b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Dhruv Jurel c Shardul b Deshpande 28 *(18b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Shubham Dubey c Dube b Deshpande 0 *(1b)*, R. Ashwin (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-1, w-4): 5; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 141.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-43 (Jaiswal, 6.2 overs), 2-49 (Buttler, 8.1), 3-91 (Samson, 14.2), 4-131 (Jurel, 19.1), 5-131 (Dubey, 19.2).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING

Deshpande 4-0-30-2, Theekshana 4-0-28-0, Shardul 4-0-32-0, Simarjeet 4-0-26-3, Jadeja 4-0-24-0.

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS

Rachin Ravindra c & b Ashwin 27 *(18b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Ruturaj Gaikwad (not out) 42 *(41b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Daryl Mitchell lbw b Chahal 22 *(13b, 4x4)*, Moeen Ali c Avesh b Burger 10 *(13b)*, Shivam Dube c Parag b Ashwin 18 *(11b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Ravindra Jadeja (obstructing the field) 5 *(6b)*, Sameer Rizvi **(Impact Player in place of Mitchell)** (not out) 15 *(8b, 3x4)*; Extras (b-1, w-5): 6; Total (for five wkts. in 18.2 overs): 145.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-32 (Ravindra, 3.4), 2-67 (Mitchell, 7.5), 3-86 (Moeen, 11.5), 4-107 (Dube, 13.6), 5-121 (Jadeja, 15.5).

ROYALS BOWLING

Boult 2.2-0-24-0, Sandeep 3-0-30-0, Ashwin 4-0-35-2, Burger **(Impact Player in place of Jurel)** 3-0-21-1, Chahal 4-0-22-1, Avesh 2-0-12-0.

Toss: RR.

PoM: Simarjeet.

CSK won by five wickets with 10 deliveries to spare.

Chasing a modest target, Ruturaj held fort at one end while Rachin Ravindra and Daryl Mitchell chipped in with cameos. The visitors fought back in the middle overs by not conceding a boundary for 39 balls. But Shivam Dube calmed nerves when he hit R. Ashwin for a six and two boundaries in the 14th over to set the home team on the path to victory.

Ahead of the game, there was trepidation about whether it would be M.S. Dhoni's last outing in Chennai. The seventh win for CSK has kept the door open for the side to make the playoffs and a chance for Dhoni to play again in the city if the defending champion features in Qualifier 2 or the final.

Next assignment

RR: May 15 vs **PBKS**
Guwahati, 7.30 p.m.

CSK: May 18 vs **RCB**
Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.

Points table

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Kolkata Knight Riders (Q)	12	9	3	18	1.428
Rajasthan Royals	12	8	4	16	0.349
Chennai Super Kings	13	7	6	14	0.528
Sunrisers Hyderabad	12	7	5	14	0.406
Royal Challengers	13	6	7	12	0.387
Delhi Capitals	13	6	7	12	-0.482
Lucknow Super Giants	12	6	6	12	-0.769
Gujarat Titans	12	5	7	10	-1.063
Mumbai Indians (E)	13	4	9	8	-0.271
Punjab Kings (E)	12	4	8	8	-0.423

Q: Qualified | E: Eliminated

Gritty Royal Challengers stay alive with emphatic win

Cameron's day out: Green rose to the occasion for RCB with an all-round show and also effected the crucial run out of Stubbs. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bengaluru refused to throw in the towel in its quest to reach the IPL playoffs, beating Delhi Capitals by 47 runs at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Sunday.

In a must-win game for both sides, Faf du Plessis' men defended a modest-looking 187 to record its fifth win on the trot and rise up to fifth in the table (12 points).

DC lost Impact Player David Warner early, but Jake Fraser-McGurk caned Mohammed Siraj for a six and two fours to commence the pursuit in fiery fashion.

But his run out at the non-striker's end when the ball deflected off pacer Yash Dayal's left-hand, a delivery after Abishek Porel had fallen, left DC reeling at 24 for three.

Shai Hope (29, 23b, 4x4) and stand-in skipper Axar Patel (57, 39b, 5x4, 3x6) tried to jump-start the chase, but the in-form Tristan Stubbs' run out while going for a non-existent single meant Capitals' playoffs chances took a massive hit.

Asked to bat first, RCB seemed set for a lot more, having scored 61 runs from the PowerPlay and being 110 for two after 10 overs. However, a lower middle-order collapse meant that the home side couldn't build on the fine efforts from Virat Kohli (27, 13b, 1x4, 3x6), Will Jacks (41, 29b, 3x4, 2x6) and Rajat Patidar (52, 32b, 3x4, 3x6).

Kohli's sizzling start

Kohli began imperiously, hitting Ishant Sharma for a six over mid-wicket and straight down the ground, and dispatching Khaleel Ahmed over the bowler's head. Kohli and Ishant also indulged in some friendly banter, but it was the latter who had the last laugh, having Kohli caught behind.

Patidar and Jacks kept up the momentum, carting the spin duo of Axar and Kuldeep Yadav to all parts.

The visitors didn't help themselves with some shoddy fielding.

In the ninth over, from Kuldeep, Axar dropped Jacks running back towards mid-on and Shai Hope grassed Patidar at long-on. In the 11th, Axar reprieved Patidar at cover off Rasikh Salam.

Oddly, the manic happenings disrupted RCB's batting rhythm. Not a single six came from overs 10 to 16 and the dismissals of Mahipal Lomror, Dinesh Karthik and Swapnil Singh in a six-ball window robbed RCB of a strong finish. In the end, none of it mattered.

SCOREBOARD

ROYAL CHALLENGERS

Virat Kohli c Porel b Ishant 27 *(13b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Faf du Plessis c Fraser-McGurk b Mukesh 6 *(7b, 1x4)*, Will Jacks c Axar b Kuldeep 41 *(29b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Rajat Patidar c Axar b Rasikh 52 *(32b, 3x4, 3x6)*, Cameron Green (not out) 32 *(24b, 1x6, 2x4)*, Mahipal Lomror c Porel b Khaleel 13 *(8b, 1x6)*, Dinesh Karthik c Kuldeep b Khaleel 0 *(2b)*, Swapnil Singh **(Impact Player in place of Patidar)** c Kushagra b Rasikh 0 *(1b)*, Karn Sharma run out 6 *(4b, 1x4)*, Mohammed Siraj run out 0 *(0b)*: Extras (b-1, lb-2, w-7): 10; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 187.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-23 (du Plessis, 2.2 overs), 2-36 (Kohli, 3.4), 3-124 (Patidar, 12.3), 4-137 (Jacks, 14.4), 5-174 (Lomror, 17.4), 6-174 (Karthik, 17.6), 7-176 (Swapnil, 18.3), 8-185 (Karn, 19.5), 9-187 (Siraj, 19.6).

CAPITALS BOWLING

Ishant 3-0-31-1, Khaleel 4-0-31-2, Mukesh 3-0-23-1, Axar 3-0-24-0, Kuldeep 4-0-52-1, Rasikh 3-0-23-2.

DELHI CAPITALS

David Warner **(Impact Player in place of Khaleel)** c Jacks b Swapnil 1 *(2b)*, Jake Fraser-McGurk run out 21 *(8b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Abishek Porel c Ferguson b Dayal 2 *(3b)*, Shai Hope c Karn b Ferguson 29 *(23b, 4x4)*, Kumar Kushagra lbw b Siraj 2 *(3b)*, Axar Patel c du Plessis b Dayal 57 *(39b, 5x4, 3x6)*, Tristan Stubbs run out 3 *(4b)*, Rasikh Salam c Jacks b Green 10 *(12b, 1x4)*, Kuldeep Yadav b Dayal 6 *(10b)*, Mukesh Kumar c Lomror b Ferguson 3 *(7b)*, Ishant Sharma (not out) 0 *(4b)*; Extras (lb-1, w-5): 6; Total (in 19.1 overs): 140.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-8 (Warner, 0.4), 2-24 (Porel, 2.1), 3-24 (Fraser-McGurk, 2.2), 4-30 (Kushagra, 3.3), 5-86 (Hope, 9.3), 6-90 (Stubbs, 10.6), 7-127 (Rasikh, 14.6), 8-128 (Axar, 15.4), 9-135 (Mukesh, 17.4).

RCB BOWLING

Swapnil 1-0-9-1, Siraj 4-0-33-1, Dayal 3.1-0-20-3, Karn 2-0-19-0, Ferguson 4-0-23-2, Green 4-0-19-1, Jacks 1-0-16-0.

Toss: DC.

PoM: Green.

RCB won by 47 runs.

Next assignment

DC: May 14 vs **LSG**
Delhi, 7.30 p.m.

RCB: May 18 vs **CSK**
Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.

The week ahead

May 13	GT vs KKR	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
May 14	DC vs LSG	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
May 15	RR vs PBKS	Guwahati	7.30 p.m.
May 16	SRH vs GT	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
May 17	MI vs LSG	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
May 18	RCB vs CSK	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
May 19	SRH vs PBKS	Hyderabad	3.30 p.m.
May 19	RR vs KKR	Guwahati	7.30 p.m.

Sangakkara rues lack of intent from Royals batters; Hussey praises Simarjeet, Ruturaj

Tarun Shastry
CHENNAI

Rajasthan Royals head coach Kumar Sangakkara bemoaned the lack of intent from his batters after his side's five-wicket loss to Chennai Super Kings here on Sunday.

Royals, just one win away from the playoffs, stuttered to its third successive loss on the road.

"I thought CSK bowled really well. In terms of batting, we lacked intent. We should have put away some of the deliveries in the first six overs," said Sangakkara.

"We lost momentum in the middle. We failed to run hard and find the gaps. We were about 25-30 runs short. This was a 170-180 wicket," he added.

CSK batting coach Michael Hussey was all praise for Player-of-the-Match Simarjeet Singh and skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad.

"I am happy for Simarjeet. He's got an opportunity and he's shown to everyone how good he is. He's been training hard behind the scenes, waiting for his chance. "He's got good pace and control, assessed the conditions well, and bowled accordingly," said Hussey. "Ruturaj's got a very good cricket brain... he knows when to knock it around and when to attack. "We couldn't have been more impressed about how he has gone about as a captain and batter," said Hussey.

Volley of appreciation: Dhoni thanks the fans after CSK's final home league game. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

INBRIEF

Martin wins French MotoGP, extends his lead

Jorge Martin extended his lead in the championship with a thrilling victory in the French MotoGP at Le Mans on Sunday. The Spaniard, who won Saturday's sprint, battled the entire race with rival Francesco Bagnaia before Marc Marquez arrived late to steal second place. Prima Pramac rider Martin heads the standings with 129 points, 38 ahead of Bagnaia who moved into second spot.

Lomachenko claims IBF lightweight crown

Ukrainian boxing great Vasiliy Lomachenko clinched the IBF lightweight World title on Sunday after producing a supreme performance to stop Australia's George Kambosos in the 11th round in Perth. Heavy favourite Lomachenko defied the home crowd and dominated throughout. Lomachenko left the Australian bloodied and sealed the 135-pound belt in the 11th round after dropping Kambosos several times before the fight was stopped by the referee.

Jaideep, Sujeet bow out of World wrestling qualifiers

Sujeet Kalkal and Jaideep Ahlawat fought well at the World wrestling qualifiers in Istanbul on Sunday but could not add more quotas to India's kitty for the Paris Olympic Games, where the country will have only one male wrestler in Aman presenting his challenge. In the 65kg bronze medal contest, Sujeet went down to USA's Zain Allen Retherford 2-2 on criteria, while Jaideep lost his 74kg bronze medal match 1-2 to Turkmenistan's Arslan Amanmyradov.

Nitten Kirrtane wins mixed silver and doubles bronze

Nitten Kirrtane continued to shine bright in the individual events of the ITF Masters World championship as he added the mixed doubles silver and the men's doubles bronze medals to his collection in Mexico City.

The results: Over-50: Men's singles, quarterfinals: Bart Beks (Ned) bt Nitten Kirrtane 7-5, 7-6(5); **Doubles, semifinals:** Beks & Sebastian Jackson (GBR) bt Nitten & Jagdish Tanwar 6-2, 2-6, [10-6].
Mixed doubles, final: Barbara Mulej (Slo) & Beks bt Isabelle Gemmel (Aus) & Nitten 6-1, 7-5.

Messi plays through a scare, Miami posts fifth straight win

Lionel Messi played the entire game despite a first-half injury scare, Benjamin Cremaschi broke a tie in the 59th minute and Inter Miami overcame an early two-goal deficit to beat Montreal 3-2 on Saturday for its fifth consecutive Major League Soccer victory. Inter Miami extended its unbeaten streak to seven matches despite Messi being held without a goal or an assist for the first time in his nine MLS appearances this season.

The result: Montreal 2 (Duke 22, Vilsaint 32) lost to Inter Miami 3 (Rojas 44, Suarez 45+3, Cremaschi 59).

Lohith nets two in Reds United FC's victory

Lohith scored a brace as Reds United FC beat Jai Bharat Nagar FC 3-0 in a BDFA C-division league football match in Bengaluru on Sunday.

The results: Govt Press FC 2 (Samuel 20, Praveen 48) drew with Gowthama FC 2 (Mahtho 34, Justin 40); Universal FC 1 (Naresh 16) drew with Pillanna Garden FC 1 (Prem 28); Reds United FC 3 (Lohith 18, 48, Titus 60+3) bt Jai Bharath Nagar FC 0.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m.
Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 12.15 a.m. (Tuesday)
LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Gujarat Titans hosts Knight Riders in a high-stakes encounter

Gill's men will look to stay alive in the play-offs race while Shreyas and Co. will look to secure a top-two finish thereby having two shots at the title

Vital cog: Gujarat Titans will look up to its lead spinner Rashid to stifle an in-form Kolkata Knight Riders. VIJAY SONEJI

IPL-17

Amol Karhadkar
AHMEDABAD

Contrary to the excitement of the last week of the Indian Premier League's first stage where the qualification scenario keeps altering with each outcome, many would feel Monday night will hardly matter in the eventual outcome.

However, both Gujarat Titans and Kolkata Knight Riders will know that there is a lot riding on the result at the Narendra Modi Stadium for their team in the final standings.

Must-win situation
Titans will again find themselves in a must-win situation to keep its hopes of a miraculous entry into the playoffs for the third time in as many seasons.

Knight Riders, meanwhile, need a win in its remaining two games to ensure a top-two finish and enjoy the advantage of an additional opportunity to enter the final.

Shreyas Iyer's in-form outfit will be hoping to seal it with a game to spare, that too against a team that has struggled to find the combination right through the season.

Having used 23 players – the most by a team this season – Titans have struggled to get going. But their captain Shubman Gill, a former Knight Riders himself, will be hoping to continue from his hundred in the last outing with another strong performance while leading against his former team.

If Gill and B. Sai Sudharsan continue their heroics at the top, Titans will be hoping for Rashid Khan to deliver the knockout punch against the table-toppers.

Knight Riders will be tempted to pair Rahmanullah Gurbaz, a former Titans player, at the top with Sunil Narine in place of England's Phil Salt, who is set to join his national squad after the league stage.

Today's match

GUJARAT TITANS vs. KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS

Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
PLAYED: 3
GT 2 | KKR 1

PREVIOUS MEETING
GT won by seven wickets, 2023

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA

Punjab women edge TN, enter last four

NATL. JR. BASKETBALL

Sports Bureau

Punjab scored a thrilling 76-74 victory over Tamil Nadu, after leading 40-35 at the interval, in the women's quarterfinals of the 74th National junior basketball championship in Indore on Sunday.

Komalpreet Kaur was the star for Punjab with 24 points, while Antheya Daisy top scored for Tamil Nadu with 21 points. In the semifinals, Punjab will challenge Maharashtra.

In the men's quarterfinals, Chandigarh beat Tamil Nadu 92-83.

The results: Men:
Quarterfinals: Chandigarh 92 (Himanshu Hooda 23, Gaurav Kumar Singh 16, Sanju Gajbhiiye 16, Ravindra Kaushik 12) bt Tamil Nadu 83 (D Mirthun Vel 35, Harish Aravind 14, Giftson Megadees 11).
Rajasthan 91 (Mohammed Ishaan 31, Ajay Kumar 16, Mayank Jawa 16, NItesh Kumar 13) bt Punjab 69 (Jaadu Maan 23, Amandeep Singh 13, Manveer Singh 10).
Uttar Pradesh 83 (Harshith Tomar 18, Vedanth Ranot 18,Aman Tyagi 17) bt Haryana 72 9Lavish 23, Ankush 22, Aditya 17).
Pre-quarterfinals: Haryana 97 (Priyam Rathee 30, Gurmeet 29, Ankush 24) bt Andhra Pradesh 88 (Akhil Kumar 22, Rahul Vaka 12).
Kerala 81 (Aswin Krishna 24, Jins Joby 13, Jeevan Joby 13) bt Maharashtra 78 (Raghav Sharma 19, Yogesh Kumar Yadav 14).
Women: Quarterfinals: Punjab 76 (Komalpreet Kaur 24, Nadar Dhillon 17, Chanda Goutham 15) bt Tamil Nadu 74 (Antheya Daisy 21, Shajitha Nooral 18, Theja Sri 15).
Karnataka 90 (Aadhya Gowda 23, Aditi Subramaniam 19, Tarusree Tarun 16, Rakshita Shetty 10) bt Gujarat 56 (Aahana George 15, Niyatiba Gohil 12).
Madhya Pradesh 73 (Kushipal Singh 29, Gunvi Agarwal 14) bt Haryana 58 (Kushbu 14, Bhumi Kataria 14, Anjali 11).
Maharashtra 93 (Aananya Bhavasar 21, Gunjar Mantri 20, Akshaya Patil 12, Tvisha Sharma 10) bt Telangana 40 (Pranishthaa 11, Hasini Vadda 10).
Pre-quarterfinals: Haryana 68 (Bhumika Kataria 17, Anjali 17, Diksha 14) bt Uttar Pradesh 61 (Ruby Rajput 23).
Telangana 61 (Nethra Birudavolu 21, YS Parinisthaa 17, Sahasra Muppiri 13) bt Rajasthan 54 (Payal 12, Purya Arya 11, Priyanka Pal 10).

Deeksha breaks 1500m National mark in LA meet

ATHLETICS

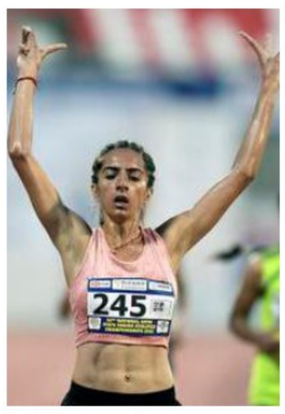
Sports Bureau

Asian Games champion Annu Rani opened her season with a decent 60.68m effort while finishing sixth in the Hylo Javelin Throw Meeting in Offenburg, Germany, on Sunday.

The National record-holder with 63.82m, Annu's best came in her last throw. Adriana Vilagos, the under-20 World champion from Serbia, won the gold with 63.58m.

Earlier, on Saturday, K.M. Deeksha bettered her personal best by more than a second as she broke Harmilan Bains' three-year-old 1500m National record at the Sound Running Track Fest in Los Angeles.

The 25-year-old who shocked Harmilan (National record 4:05.39) and won the Inter-State National gold in Bhubaneswar last year, clocked 4:04.78s (previous best 4:06.07s) while finishing third in Los Angeles. American Kristlin Gear, the US National 3000m steeplechase champion, won in a personal best 4:03.65s.



Deeksha...running to a new mark. FILE PHOTO

Sable's narrow miss
Meanwhile Avinash Sable, the Asian Games and Commonwealth Games silver medallist, narrowly missed breaking his National record while finishing second in the 5000m in 13:20.37s (National record 13:19.37) while Gulveer Singh (13:31.65) was fifth.

In the women's 5000m, Asian Games champion Parul Chaudhary was fifth in 15:10.69s and Ankita (15:28.08) was 10th. Olympic champion Sifan Hassan of the Netherlands won the women's 5000m gold in 14:58.83s.

Kartik Kumar was second in the men's 10,000m in 28:07.66s and in the women's 10,000m Seema (32:45.61s) and Sanjivani Jadhav (32:50.12) finished 12th and 13th respectively.

In the women's 3000m steeplechase, Priti clocked 9:53.40s for the 11th spot.

Top two spots
In Slovenia, Sahil Silwal and Vikrant Malik who have both thrown over 80m in the past, took the top two spots in men's javelin throw with 77.81m and 75.28m respectively in the Matica Sustarsica in Patrika Cvetana meet at Kranj. And Dhanvir Singh was fourth in the men's shot put with 17.75m.

Consolation win for Zimbabwe in final T20I

Agence France-Presse
DHAKA

Sikandar Raza and Brian Bennett hit half-centuries as Zimbabwe secured an eight-wicket consolation victory over Bangladesh in the final Twenty20 International in Dhaka on Sunday to avoid a 5-0 whitewash.

Captain Raza hit an unbeaten 72 off 46 to guide Zimbabwe to 158 for two after it restricted Bangladesh, which won the first four matches of the series, to 157 for six.

Bennett struck 70 off 49 balls after picking up two for 20 with the ball at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

The scores: Bangladesh 157/6 in 20 overs (Mahmudullah Riyad 54, Najmul Hossain Shanto 36) lost to Zimbabwe 158/2 in 18.3 overs (Sikandar Raza 72 n.o. , Bennett 70); **Toss:** Zimbabwe;
Player-of-the-Match: Bennett;
Player-of-the-Series: Taskin.
(Bangladesh won five-match T20I series 4-1).

Tabilo knocks out Djokovic in the third round

ITALIAN OPEN

Agence France-Presse
ROME

Novak Djokovic was knocked out of the Italian Open in the third round on Sunday by Alejandro Tabilo in a stunning 6-2, 6-3 defeat for the 24-time Grand Slam champion.

Top seed Djokovic's bid for a record-extending 41st Masters 1000 title was ended in just over an hour by Chilean Tabilo, who is ranked 32nd in the world but was hugely impressive and claimed his first win over a top-10 opponent.

The 36-year-old Serb was eliminated two days after being accidentally being struck on the head by a bottle following his straightforward second-round win over Corentin Moutet.

And his subdued performance on a court where he has won six titles suggested he may have still been suffering from that blow, even if he laughed it off by wearing a cycling crash helmet to practice on Saturday.

Biggest win: Tabilo took out the top seed Djokovic in straight sets. GETTY IMAGES

Djokovic's early elimination is a blow for the last major tournament before Roland Garros later this month, which started without Italian World No. 2 Jannik Sinner and third-ranked Carlos Alcaraz.

Important results: Men: Third round: Alejandro Tabilo (Chi) bt Novak Djokovic 6-2, 6-3; Grigor Dimitrov bt Terence Atmane 7-6(3), 6-3.
Second round: Stefanos Tsitsipas bt Jan-Lennard Struff 6-7(1), 6-4, 6-4; Andrey Rublev bt Marcos Giron 5-7, 6-4, 7-5; Holger Rune bt Luca Nardi 6-4, 6-4; Alex De Minaur bt Roberto Carballes Baena 6-3, 6-2; Daniil Medvedev bt Jack Draper 7-5, 6-4.
Women: Third round: Maria Sakkari bt Anhelina Kalinina 7-6(4), 6-0; Aryna Sabalenka bt Dayana Yastremska 6-4, 6-2; Coco Gauff bt Jaqueline Cristian 6-1, 0-6, 6-3; Zheng Qinwen bt Linda Noskova 3-6, 6-1, 6-2.

Pranavi ends tied seventh with a strong finish

GOLF

Press Trust of India
SEOUL

Pranavi Urs produced a strong finish with three birdies in a four-hole stretch on the back nine for a top-10 finish at the Aramco Team Series Korea here.

Pranavi shot rounds of 69-77-69 for a 1-under 215 and was tied-seventh at the end of the competition. This was the second top-10 finish in six starts this season for the Mysuru golfer, who has been an Order of Merit winner in the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour.

The other two Indians, Paris Olympics-bound Diksha Dagar (79-72-71) shot 6-over to finish tied 37th while Vani Kapoor (77-74-77) had a below-par 12-over and tied 60th rank.

Korea's Hyo-Joo Kim lived up to her billing as the home favourite to win by three shots.

Esha pips Manu in the sports pistol final

Champions: Esha and Anish. RITU RAJ KONWAR

SHOOTING

Sports Bureau

Esha Singh won the 25m sports pistol with a 43-40 margin over Manu Bhaker in the third Olympic shooting trials in Bhopal on Sunday.

Esha had conceded a lot of ground with a qualification score of 579 as against the top score of 586 by Rhythm Sangwan who was placed third, to gain a 0.6 point bonus for winning the final.

Like the way Manu had done in the first trial, Esha also shot a score better than the world record in the final.

In men's 25-metre rapid fire pistol, Anish Bhanwala beat Vijayveer Sidhu 36-31, registering a perfect-5 five times in the final.

The results:
Men: 25m rapid fire pistol: 1. Anish Bhanwala 36(587); 2. Vijayveer Sidhu 31(580); 3. Ankur Goel 19(579); 4. Adarsh Singh 17(572); 5. Bhavesh Shekhawat 13(577).
Women: 25m sports pistol: 1. Esha Singh 43(579); 2. Manu Bhaker 40(585); 3. Rhythm Sangwan 33(586); 4. Simranpreet Kaur Brar 26(585); 5. Abhidnya Patil 20(575).

Anusha leaps to triple jump gold; Santhosh claims 400m hurdles

The 21-year-old from Andhra Pradesh touches 13.53m, just 0.04 off the 18-year-old meet record; the Asian bronze medallist clinches with a time of 50.04s, while Veerpal emerges victorious in the women's field; Dev triumphs in men's pole vault

FEDERATION CUP

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

Surging ahead: Anusha came out on top after some stiff competition while Santhosh said he expected a better timing. BISWARANJAN ROUT

Mallala Anusha overcame unwanted distractions and a stiff challenge from an experienced Sheena N.V. to achieve her personal best and win the women's triple jump crown on the opening day of the National Federation athletics meet at the Kalinga Stadium here on Sunday.

The 21-year-old from Andhra Pradesh leaped to 13.53m, just 0.04 off the 18-year-old meet record, to beat Sheena in style in pleasant conditions.

Anusha, whose previous best was 13.40m when she won the National Open meet in Bengaluru last year, had claimed the bronze in the Goa National Games with 13.16m.

She set the tone by jumping 13.28m in her second attempt. Sheena, a former Asian championships bronze medallist, responded with 13.32m.

Anusha consistently produced good jumps to give Sheena a good chase but faced some challenges in her fourth and fifth jumps. She was not happy from where her fourth attempt was measured and marked 13.29m.

She protested strongly over a similar issue in her fifth jump, which was remeasured from a different spot and was rectified from 13.11m to 13.35m, helping her restore lead.

The Andhra jumper gave her best in her final attempt and won the title comfortably.

Santhosh Kumar T., who spent about 20 days in the Bahamas camp and then competed in a World Continental tour event in Dubai to time 50.32, won the men's 400m hurdles comfortably.

Taking a clear lead after the last bend, Santhosh finished his second race of the season clocking 50.04.

The Asian bronze medallist expected a better timing.

"The wait of almost 45 minutes before the race perhaps cooled my body down. It was not my day," said Santosh.

Veerpal Kaur, targetting 58s, was the unexpected winner of the women's 400m hurdles as she stopped the clock at 59.43s to take the gold.

Vithya withdraws

Vithya Ramraj, who had hit the headlines by equalling the legendary P.T. Usha's National record of 55.42s at the Hangzhou Asian Games in October last, disappointed all by withdrawing from the race early.

Vithya began visibly slowly and ran only a few metres before pulling out and walking off with a 'back' issue.

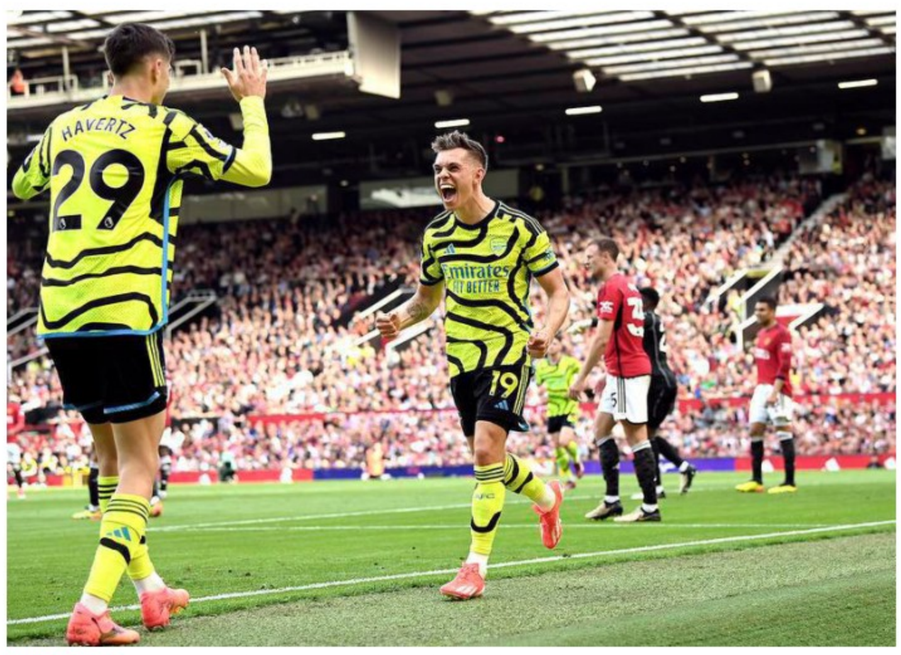
The other big name, Siva S., did not compete in pole vault, which was won by Asian under-20 bronze medallist Dev Meena with a mark of 5.10m.

Local favourite Animesh Kujur was the lone sprinter to clock a sub-21 (20.81s) time in the men's 200m semifinals.

The results (finals):

Men: 400mH: 1. Santhosh Kumar T. (TN) 50.04, 2. Nikhil Bhardwaj (Pun) 50.92, 3. Dhaval Mahesh Utekar (Guj) 51.13.
Pole vault: 1. Dev Kumar Meena (MP) 5.10m, 2. Shekhar Kumar Pandey (UP) 4.90m, 3. Hariharan R. (TN) 4.0m.
Women: 400mH: 1. Veerpal Kaur (Pun) 59.43, 2. Salini Valuparamnil Kris (Ker) 1:00.73, 3. Ramandeep Kaur (Pun) 1:01.29.
Triple jump: 1. Mallala Anusha (AP) 13.53m, 2. Sheena N.V. (Ker) 13.32m, 3. Gayathry Sivakumar (Ker) 13.08m.
Javelin: 1. Rashmi K. (AP) 54.75m, 2. Karishma Sanil (Kar) 49.91m, 3. Rupinder Kaur Sohal (Pun) 47.66m.
5000m: 1. Lili Das (WB) 16:31.05, 2. Poonam Sonune (Mah) 17:02.51, 3. Kiran (Har) 17:06.64.

Trossard finds the net as Gunners punish a hapless Manchester United



Crucial goal: Trossard's 20th minute strike helped Arsenal keep the pressure on City. GETTY IMAGES

EURO LEAGUES

Reuters
MANCHESTER

Arsenal's Leandro Trossard capitalised on dreadful Manchester United defending to give his side a 1-0 victory on Sunday that saw Mikel Arteta's men provisionally overtake Manchester City for top spot in the Premier League table.

While Arsenal, which won for just the second time at Old Trafford in its last 17 visits, has 86 points with one game left of the tightest title race in years, holder City remain in the driving seat with 85 points and two matches to play.

Trossard scored in the 20th minute when Kai Havertz strolled barely challenged into space on the right side before sending the ball into the box for Trossard to tuck home.

The game swung from end to end over a final tense few minutes, with United goalkeeper Andre Onana leaping to push away shots from substitute Gabriel Martinelli and Declan Rice.

United is eighth with two games left, and trail sixth-placed Newcastle by three points in its quest for a European berth next season.

Newly-crowned LaLiga champion Real Madrid earned an emphatic 4-0 victory over relegated Granada on Saturday, extending its unbeaten league run to 28 games.

The champion celebrated with fans, meeting with government officials and parading through the Madrid streets.

The results:

Premier League: Nottingham Forest 2 (Boly 16, Hudson-Odoi 74) lost to Chelsea 3 (Mudryk 8, Sterling 80, Jackson 82); Manchester United 0 bt Arsenal 1 (Trossard 21).

LaLiga: Granada 0 lost to Real Madrid 4 (Garcia 38, Guler 45+2, Diaz 49, 58); Athletic Bilbao 2 (Inaki Williams 58, Villalibre 90+6) drew with Osasuna 2 (Raul Garcia 40, Ruben Garcia 48); Cadiz 1 (Alcaraz 35-pen) bt Getafe 0; Atletico Madrid 1 (De Paul 84) bt Celta Vigo 0.

Serie A: Lazio 2 (Patric 45+2, Vecino 89) bt Empoli 0; AC Milan 5 (Bennacer 35, Pulisic 59, 86, Reijnders 74, Leao 84) bt Cagliari 1 (Nandez 63); Napoli 0 lost to Bologna 2 (Ndoye 9, Posch 12); Genoa 2 (Badelj 56, Kumbulla 63-og) bt Sassuolo 1 (Pinamonti 31-pen); Verona 1 (Swiderski 67) lost to Torino 2 (Savva 77, Pellegri 83).

THE HINDU GROUP

SOMETIMES, CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE NEED CHAMPIONS TOO.

Sometimes, makers of change need believers in change. They need visionaries to foresee their vision. They need voices to amplify their cries. Hands to lift them up when circumstances pull them down. Cheers to keep them going when the road gets rough. They need unbiased individuals with no ulterior motives to support them. Champions of change need champions like you to nominate them, give their ideas a platform and back them up.

The Hindu businessline Changemaker Awards is now open for nomination.

Scan the QR code or visit newsth.live/BLCM2024THP to nominate a Changemaker.

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MARUTI SUZUKI AUTHORISED DEALERS: **BENGALURU:** **RNS MOTORS:** YESHWANTHPUR, BOMMANAHALLI, NELAMANGALA: 9538965804. **SURAKSHAA CAR CARE:** ELECTRONICS CITY, KORAMANGALA, BANGARPET, ATTIBELLE, SRINIVASAPURA, HAROHALLI, CHIKKATHIRUPATHI: 8884442299. **VARUN MOTORS:** MALLESHWARAM, HEBBAL, INFANTRY ROAD, RAJANAKUNTE, MANCHANAHALLI: 7899100200. **BIMAL:** ITPL ROAD, YELAHANKA, BANASHANKARI, VARTHUR, DOMLUR, HOSKOTE, CHIKKABALLAPUR, DEVANAHALLI, BAGEPALLI, SIDLAGHATTA, VIJAYPURA, H CROSS, BUDIGERE, GUDIBANDA, HESARGHATTA, PERASANDRA, NARASPURA, KGF: 080-30693069. **KALYANI:** MYSORE ROAD, BANNERGHATTA ROAD, NAGARBHAVI, BANASWADI, LALBAGH, RAMANAGARAM, CHANNAPATNA, KANAKPURA, BANNERGATTA, BIDADI, DABASPETE: 9590990011. **KATARIA:** KANAKAPURA ROAD: 7899040000. **MANDOVI:** BASAVANAGUDI, ST JOHNS ROAD, BASAVESHWARA NAGAR, YELAHANKA, MALUR, KOLAR, GOURIBIDNUR: 9740030077. **PRATHAM:** HSR LAYOUT, BELLANDHUR, ANEKAL, MAGADI, CHINTAMANI, MULBAGAL, DODDABALLAPUR, SARJAPUR VILLAGE, TEKAL: 9591991199. **TUMKUR:** **SAKETH:** TUMKUR, CHITRADURGA, TIPTUR, KUNIGAL, GUBBI, HOSADURGA, CHALLAKERE: 9980211099. **MYSORE:** **MANDOVI:** MYSORE, MANDYA, MADDUR, KR PET, CHAMRAJNAGAR, GONIKOPPAL, KUSHAL NAGAR, SOMWARPET, NAGAMANGALA, T NARSIPURA: 9108731263. **KALYANI MOTORS:** MYSORE, NANJANAGUDU, GUNDLUPETE, MADIKERI, PERIYAPATTANA, HUNSUR, K R NAGAR, H D KOTE: 9590960011. **HASSAN:** **VENKAT MOTORS:** HASSAN, SAKALESHPUR, ARSIKERE, BELUR, CHANNARAYAPATNA: 9008501445.

Terms and conditions apply. Creative visualization. Black glass on the vehicle is due to lighting effect. Accessories and features shown in the pictures may not be part of the standard equipment and may vary according to the variant. Images used are for illustration purpose only. Colours shown may vary from actual body colours due to printing on paper. *Fuel efficiency as certified by test agency Rule 115 of CMVR 1989.